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SA STUDIES PROVE VOLUNTARY PRE-COMMITMENT DOESN'T WORK

Independent Member for Denison, Andrew Wilkie and Independent Senator for South Australia, Nick Xenophon, says results from two trials of optional pre-commitment schemes for poker machines in South Australia, released today, prove voluntary systems don't work.

Senator Xenophon says the results vindicate the Federal Government's move towards a full mandatory pre-commitment system for all poker machines in Australia.

"These two studies released by the South Australian Government show these 'Mickey Mouse' schemes didn't work, and you'd have to be 'Goofy' to think they were ever going to work," Nick said.

Mr Wilkie says the two trials have shown that a full mandatory pre-commitment system is necessary to reduce the damage caused by problem gambling to Australian communities.

"For any scheme to work, it has to be mandatory," Andrew said.

"This is about making machines safer. We don't have optional seatbelts, so why would you have optional pre-commitment?"

The final report into the trial of the ChangeTracker card scheme concluded that the scheme was "not sufficiently useful in managing gaming expenditure nor did it encourage the majority of participants to want to use the card following the trial".

"The report makes it clear the scheme was so bad, people wouldn't use the cards in the real world. As failures go, it doesn't get worse than this," Nick said.

Similarly the report into the 'PlaySmart' pre-commitment scheme found less than 1 percent of J-card loyalty card users eligible to trial the scheme could be bothered to do so.

"The poker machine industry wants voluntary pre-commitment because they know people won't use it and it won't stop problem gambling," Nick said.

"The only way to protect problem gamblers is to have a scheme that is mandatory."