



CLUBS VICTORIA INC .

URGENT MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

6 April 2005

PROBLEM GAMBLERS CONDEMNED TO THEIR FATE WHILE GOVERNMENT & ABOLITIONIST DEFY THE RESEARCH

Today's article in the Age is further evidence of the folly that grips people when they consider problem gambling.

The article has uncovered unpublished research that shows that caps on gaming machine numbers don't work. The obvious conclusion would be abandon caps because capping gaming machine numbers doesn't work. However, the response is a call for more caps. ClubsVIC is concerned that this unfounded conclusion will, at best, result in no assistance for problem gamblers and at worse aggravate the problem.

Industry has consistently advised the government and the media that numbers of machines are irrelevant. In NSW there are nearly 300% more gaming machines per head of population and the same incidence of problem gambling. In Tasmania the numbers of machines per adult is less than Victoria, and the same incidence of problem gambling.

The research did not show that more caps, or more stringent caps, would be more effective. What it showed is that **CAPS DON'T WORK**. Any extrapolation from that basic finding is simply guess work and dangerous guess work, because caps actually might hurt some problem gamblers, they will certainly intensify the detriment caused by the market distortion.

Any body's "gut feeling" is hardly a basis for effective public policy regarding a serious public health issue. Someone had a gut feeling in the 1930s that 6 o'clock closing would address problem drinking. In fact, what it did was create problem drinking around 5.55pm.

There are no easy answers to problem gambling, and quick fix, headline grabs like "more caps" are now proven to be ineffective. While the government and the abolitionists waste their time on what we know doesn't work, problem gamblers are languishing and the market distortions are being exacerbated.

Not one community club in Victoria wants a problem gambler at its venue, and ClubsVIC is serious about its role in addressing this issue. The Victorian clubs are working on the self exclusion program and other proven measures to help the 2% of people who have a problem.

Gaming machines are not evil. For 98% of the population they are a source of harmless fun and entertainment. It's time the government and the abolitionists stopped simply "industry bashing" and started addressing the problem.

Clubs Victoria Inc

Level 2, 19-21 Argyle Place South, Carlton South VIC 3053

Correspondence to PO Box 363, Carlton South VIC 3053

Phone (03) 9349 2909 Fax (03) 9349 4915

Email admin@clubsvic.org Website www.clubsvic.org

Community clubs care.

ENDS

For more information please contact Margaret Kearney, Executive Director, on 0409 879 277