



FAMILY FIRST



Steve Fielding **Family First** Senator for Victoria

MEDIA RELEASE

SF/383. Wednesday, September 10, 2008

TOMORROW A CHANCE TO STOP THE POKIES PLAGUE

STATE Governments are addicted to poker machine revenue and Australians are paying the price for it.

A Senate inquiry tomorrow will have the chance to help cut the rate of problem gambling in Australia, when it hears expert witnesses on Family First's plan for poker machines.

"State governments in Australia have ignored problem gamblers for too long, because governments are addicted to the billions of dollars in tax revenue," Family first Leader Senator Steve Fielding said today.

"Family First's pokies plan puts strict limits on the location of poker machines and the rate at which people can lose their cash. There is evidence that the harm of poker machines can be greatly reduced. That's why Family First is taking action to put commonsense limits on how poker machines operate."

Tomorrow the Senate Community Affairs Committee will travel to Melbourne to hear evidence on Family First's two draft laws. The committee will then travel to Sydney for hearings on Friday.

"A paper published this year in *International Gambling Studies* stated more than 50% of regular poker machine users are problem gamblers or at risk of becoming problem gamblers and about 85% of problem gamblers use poker machines. More than half the money spent on poker machines in clubs and pubs in Victoria is spent by problem gamblers."

Family First's plan would restrict poker machines to racetracks and casinos, which are dedicated gambling venues, and set the following limits to minimise their harm:

ATM limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit ATM withdrawals in gambling venues to \$100 a day
Smart Cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce pre-commitment smart cards, which have a maximum fortnightly monetary credit of \$1000 Smart cards need to be pre-registered at least one week in advance Require smart cards for all bets over \$1
Machine limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ban free spins Ban multiple line betting Mandate a 5 second delay between spins Limit bank note acceptors to denominations of not more than \$20
Betting limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash: up to \$1 a spin bets using cash Smart card: over \$1 to \$5 a spin bets using smart card only
Prize limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit payout prizes to \$1,000 on cash bets and \$2,000 with a smart card

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