



BARRY O'FARRELL MP
NEW SOUTH WALES LIBERAL LEADER

31 March 2009

Mr Gary Banks
Commissioner
Productivity Commission
Locked Bay 2
Collins Street East
Melbourne VIC 8003

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Dear Mr Banks

Re: Gambling Inquiry

I submit the following comments for consideration by the Productivity Commission's current Gambling Inquiry.

Problem gambling is certainly an area of concern for the broader community; the Productivity Commission Inquiry will allow a full analysis of both the costs and benefits of gambling, and provide direction for policy makers in the future.

In undertaking its analysis, I believe the Productivity Commission should consider the positive role played by the Clubs movement in NSW. The Clubs movement provides a good model whereby responsible gaming supports significant community outcomes.

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal has calculated that the approximately 1400 registered clubs in NSW collectively create some \$811 million worth of social value and benefits for our communities – in addition to the benefits associated with the employment of some 43,300 people across NSW. In 2007, clubs gave \$108 million in cash or in-kind support to community groups.

All around our State, children get the opportunity to play sport and stay healthy thanks to the club movement's support. There is also the beneficial contribution to our community through bowling greens, golf courses and other recreational facilities.

Then there are the less visible but equally vital services and programs that clubs are increasingly involved with, such as support for our older citizens through aged care services.

I also believe that clubs take their responsibilities seriously, subscribing to responsible gambling management programs (like ClubSafe) and complying with extensive state law.

In an era where the NSW Government is increasing taxes on registered clubs in NSW – often affecting their very viability – it is vital the Productivity Commission to understand and appreciate the significant contribution that clubs make to the NSW community.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry O'Farrell', written in a cursive style.

Barry O'Farrell MP
NSW Leader of the Opposition