

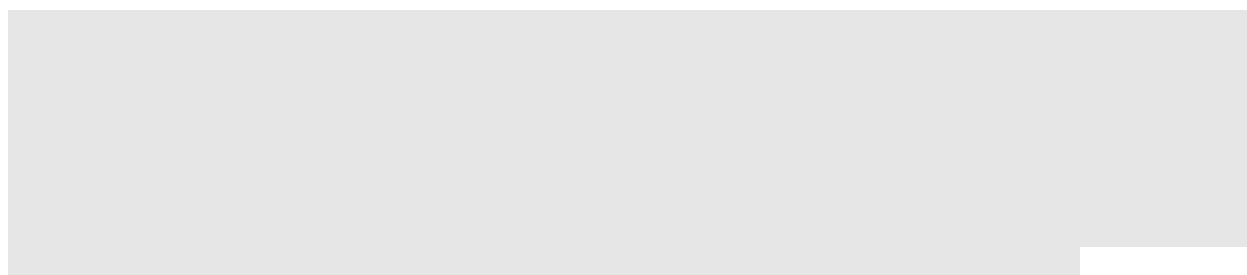
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## Joint Submission on Electoral Act Review Interim Report 15 April 2019

The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE), the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol and the Alliance for Gambling Reform welcome this opportunity to make a joint submission on the issues raised by the *Electoral Act Review Interim Report*. The submitting bodies support a ban on political donations from gambling, alcohol and tobacco businesses in Tasmania.

### **Consultation Issue 19: That a prohibition on donations from certain parties not be considered in Tasmania at this stage.**

The submitting bodies believe that there is a severe conflict of interest in political parties and candidates accepting donations from gambling, alcohol and tobacco corporations. The profits of these industries are highly dependent on the laws and regulations the Tasmanian Government puts in place, more than most other businesses. The acceptance of large amounts of donations from these businesses to political parties with policies that favour the vested interests of these businesses over community well-being creates a perception that policy for these industries is for sale. A similar perception has been created by the large donations accepted by the Victorian Labor party in that state from the gambling and alcohol businesses in that state.<sup>1</sup> Victoria's *Electoral Act of 2002* only limits donations from gambling and casino licence holders to \$50,000 a year.<sup>2</sup> Donations from these businesses should be banned, as is the case in NSW.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Royce Millar, Nick Tascano and Ben Schneiders, 'Labor big winner from \$1 m pokies donation jackpot', *The Age*, 25 March 2019, <https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/labor-big-winner-from-1m-pokies-donation-jackpot-20190325-p517ed.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-10-17/fact-check-victorias-political-donations-laws/9042818>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.elections.nsw.gov.au/Funding-and-disclosure/Political-donations/Unlawful-political-donations/Prohibited-donors>

The gambling, alcohol and hospitality businesses gave at least \$514,000 to the Tasmanian Liberals in 2017-18, to help influence the result of the state election.<sup>4</sup> The Australian Hotels Association paid \$289,000 to the Tasmanian division of the Liberal Party.<sup>5</sup> The Federal Group provided \$50,000 to the Tasmanian Liberal Party, with Kalis Hospitality providing \$70,000, EBC Leisure \$44,000 and the Goodstone Group \$80,000.<sup>6</sup> The top five declared donors to the Tasmanian Liberal party all had interests in EGMs and half of all declared donations to the Tasmanian Liberal party in 2017-2018 were from EGM owners or their representatives.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Christopher Knaus and Nick Evershed, 'Gambling lobby gave \$500,000 to Liberals ahead of Tasmanian election', *The Guardian*, 1 February 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/feb/01/gambling-lobby-gave-500000-to-liberals-ahead-of-tasmanian-election>

<sup>5</sup> Nigel Gladstone and Nick O'Malley, 'Politicians hit gambling donations jackpot as pokies contributions soar', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 February 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Alexandra Humphries and Ellen Coulter, 'Who were the biggest donors to Tasmanian political parties leading up to last year's election?' *ABC News*, 1 February 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Nigel Gladstone and Nick O'Malley, 'Politicians hit gambling donations jackpot as pokies contributions soar', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 February 2019.