



Speech by
**Mr DENVER
BEANLAND**

MEMBER FOR INDOORROOPILLY

Hansard 9 November 1999

GAMING MACHINES

Mr BEANLAND (Indoorroopilly—LP) (7.04 p.m.): The Australian Bureau of Statistics' retail trade figures include net takings from gaming machines. It is little wonder that retail trade figures in this nation continue to grow when they include net takings from gaming machines. I refer to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Retail Trade document. The section headed "Definition of Turnover" in the explanatory notes states—

"Turnover includes retail sales; wholesale sales; takings from repairs, meals and hiring of goods (except for rent, leasing and hiring of land and buildings); and commissions from agency activity (e.g. commissions received from collecting dry cleaning, selling lottery tickets, etc.) and net takings from gaming machines etc."

I raise this matter because I think it is important for people to be aware that retail trade figures include net takings from gaming machines. I have heard it raised on a number of occasions and it is not generally well known within the community that the ABS figures do include those gaming machine figures.

The review of gaming machines in this State has ground to a halt. We have heard some mention of it in the past few days from the Treasurer. The report on gaming machines is now some five months overdue. While families are being destroyed, this Beattie Labor Government sleeps.

In September I raised this fundamental issue in this House. Still the Government does nothing. Through its failure over the past 12 months to stop a flood of applications and approvals to allow poker machines in shopping centres, this Government is acquiescing to this disease which is destroying Queensland families. By allowing poker machines into shopping centres, we are allowing this gambling addiction disease to spread throughout the community.

Applications for poker machines to be located in shopping centres are currently being opposed by a number of local governments. The Redland and Logan Shire Councils are two that come to mind. Having said that, they cannot stop them, because the power actually resides with the State Government. It is all very well for the Treasurer to say, "In the review of gaming machines we are going to change the situation so that people can object", but no indication has been given as to whether the current review process, which ends with the Treasurer, will result in change. It will mean little if the review is to the Minister and not through some other process.

To simply say that it will be similar to the current town planning application is of little value, because we all know that under the town plan people object to the local authority and if the local authority approves the application they then go to the Planning and Environment Court—an independent court of this State. An equivalent to a District Court judge presides over that court.

Objections in relation to gaming machines go through a process to the Queensland Gaming Commission. If it approves an application, it then goes on to the Minister. The Minister simply allowing for input for people to object will mean little unless we see some real proof that the Minister is going to uphold a swag of those objections and knock back applications for poker machines. Simply saying that we will have a similar process is of little value.

We have seen that applications are now flooding in for poker machines in taverns and restaurants that are located next to child-care centres. In the last few days an application for poker machines has been made in relation to a shopping centre in the heart of a middle income family area. The area around this shopping centre is designated a high density residential area. The shopping centre, at which there is already a child-care centre, is the subject of this application for poker machines as well as an application for a general liquor licence. This shopping centre is about one kilometre from one school and two kilometres from another school.

I am sure that the applicants are aware that this will be good for business, but it will not be good for families and individuals living in that area. There are already a large number of general liquor licences located in that area. Obviously there will be poker machines within those facilities. There is no need for another facility to be established right next door to a child-care centre. It is not up the street somewhere or a kilometre away, but right next door.

It is little wonder that this is the cause of distress and anger within the community. There is no point Ministers or parliamentarians saying that we cannot do anything. We as a Parliament can certainly do something. In particular, this Government can do something. It can take heed and cease further approvals until this matter has been resolved.

Time expired.
