




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MAIWAR

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ADJOURNMENT

Indooroopilly, Gaming Machines

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (7.24 pm): Mr Speaker, I rise this evening to talk about a pub. Not just any pub, but the original Pig 'n' Whistle at Indooroopilly, which has been there for some 19 years. In a fortunate turn of events it is only 100 metres from my office, and it is as welcoming for a refreshment after work now as it was in the year 2000, when I worked my first retail job in Brisbane at the sports store in the Indooroopilly shopping centre.

For those not familiar with 'the Pig', it opens out from within the Indooroopilly shopping centre, which is itself the most significant community hub in Indooroopilly and a number of surrounding suburbs, for that matter. It is a family-friendly venue where I have taken my kids for dinner and even hosted events over the last few months. A few weeks ago I was surprised and disappointed to discover that the owners, who are significant donors to both Labor and the LNP, had applied for 45 poker machines at the Pig 'n' Whistle. The community had no notice of the application other than a small sign on the street outside the pub, but I was clearly not the only one concerned about this application.

Despite the underwhelming public notification, Maiwar locals started dropping into my office in big numbers, expressing their disbelief that this much loved local venue was looking to install pokies. My office put on a very well attended community forum to help locals understand the application, the process, and how they could have their voices heard. Locals could not believe how little the venue was required to do to notify the public of this application or their right to object.

Locals around Indooroopilly have now spoken. We are calling on the gambling regulator to stop these pokies. There is an enormous public interest in an application like this in any community. Pokies rip more than \$2 billion from the pockets of Queenslanders each year, and the community is angry that governments do nothing about the devastation wrought by gambling addiction. For four years Labor has not fixed the Newman government's deregulation of the pokies in 2014. Under the Newman government public notification requirements were cut, extra pokies were allowed into suburban venues and machines started taking \$50 and \$100 notes. Instead, Labor is pushing ahead with the LNP's Queens Wharf mega casino, which will bring 800 new pokies into the heart of Brisbane. They have handed over nearly 10 per cent of the CBD to casino owners, who just happen to also be major donors to both Labor and the LNP.

The reason the old parties continue to accept the devastation caused by gambling addiction is abundantly clear. Both Labor and the LNP continue to take donations from the enormous and powerful pokies lobby and, perhaps more significantly, the government is addicted to the more than \$700 million in annual tax revenue from pokies. Nobody else does this to their own citizens. Nowhere else in the world are pokies so common and their effects on gambling addicts so destructive. I urge the government to immediately take steps to undo the damage done by Campbell Newman. In the long term we need to wean Queensland off pokies revenue, get pokies out of pubs and clubs and stop new casinos. We need to put people ahead of the profits of the pokies lobby.

In the meantime, thanks to everyone in Maiwar who voiced their concern over the Pig 'n' Whistle proposal. I say to everyone who is listening that we can stop these pokies if we stick together, and I will be with you every step of the way.