




Speech By  
**Amy MacMahon**

**MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE**

---

Record of Proceedings, 13 October 2022

**CASINO CONTROL AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (6.28 pm): I rise to contribute to the Casino Control and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Queensland Greens support any attempt to rein in the devastating effects the gambling industry and their tainted money have on this state. While some of the measures in this bill are appropriate, we have serious doubts about the Labor Party's commitment to stamping out the flow of criminal money laundered by casinos given how much money from gambling corporations ends up donated to the Labor Party coffers, not to mention the millions sucked out of working communities in the form of predatory and problem gambling.

The gambling industry has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Labor Party since 2015. The Australian Hotels Association donated more than \$89,000 to the Queensland Labor Party; Clubs New South Wales donated more than \$89,000 to the Queensland Labor Party; Tabcorp donated more than \$57,000 to the Queensland Labor Party; and Star Entertainment Group, which has just been declared unfit to hold a licence in Queensland, has donated more than \$43,000 to the Queensland Labor Party.

**Government members** interjected.

**Dr MacMAHON:** I will take those interjections. Members are so addicted to taking corporate donations that they have forgotten the difference between an individual donation and a corporate donation.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, I have been listening carefully to your contribution. I would ask you to demonstrate how your contribution is relevant to the long title of the bill.

**Dr MacMAHON:** Star Entertainment, now occupying more than 10 per cent of the Brisbane CBD, hopes to build a megacasino and luxury hotel right next to this parliament. They are advertising luxury apartments with a price tag of \$3 million at the Queen's Wharf complex in the middle of a housing crisis at a time when we should be building social housing. This government is green-lighting penthouses for their political donors.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member, again I would ask you to demonstrate the relevance to the long title of the bill.

**Dr MacMAHON:** This is the same Star that hid \$55 million in cash flows from criminal organisations and their associates and were found unfit to hold a casino licence, yet it seems they will be allowed to continue to build this megacasino right next door. Truly, the spirit of Bjelke-Petersen is alive and well in Queensland.

**Ms KING:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I question the relevance of the member's contribution. I note your previous guidance. I am not certain there has been any change in the member's approach.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. I will handle the situation. I will ask the member for South Brisbane to take her seat while I take some advice. There is no point of order. I have previously provided guidance, but I will ask the member to continue to demonstrate the relevance of her contribution to the long title of the bill.

**Dr MacMAHON:** These issues with Star have all been revealed in a single toothless inquiry with submissions only lasting a week and a handful of public hearings. The Gotterson inquiry is just the tip of the iceberg. We do not know the actual extent of corruption and money laundering in this state. Who knows what remains buried and what a more substantial investigation could have uncovered. What we do know is that these gambling giants do not donate to political parties without expecting something in return. As I have mentioned, the Greens will support this bill because even a measly attempt to shine a spotlight on misconduct is better than the system that allows money to change hands between criminal organisations and casinos who then donate to both Labor and the LNP.

If this government were serious about stamping out the criminal conduct of their mates in the gambling industry, then it would not be taking their money. If this government were serious about corruption, they would tell Queenslanders how much this government has leased out prime CBD public land for on a 99-year lease. If this government were serious about corruption, it would release the social impact study of Star's megacasino and we would see just how many people are going to be sucked dry by predatory and problem gambling. The government would release Star's business case, they would release the cost-benefit analysis and they would release the terms relating to the 99-year lease of some of Queensland's most valuable land. But they will not, because the Labor Party and protecting casinos goes hand in hand. The ties between this government and the gambling industry are completely out of line with community expectations.

As I have said, the Greens welcome the minor reforms introduced in this bill, but the government has a lot more work to do if they are going to prove to Queenslanders that the Labor Party is not tainted by casino corruption and this government is genuinely willing to tackle organised crime in this state.