



Speech By  
**Stephen Andrew**

**MEMBER FOR MIRANI**


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Record of Proceedings, 20 March 2024

**CASINO CONTROL AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

Resumed from 19 March (see p. 712), on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (11.30 am), continuing: Nowhere does the bill acknowledge that gambling is, in fact, a fun and relaxing activity for many people. It is not my cup of tea, but many people feel otherwise, and this government is certainly no stranger to its economic benefits. Last year the Queensland government raked in a whopping \$1.9 billion in gambling taxes. Addiction is an extremely serious issue, but it is certainly not limited to gambling. Millions of Australians show signs of alcohol dependency and there is no doubt that alcoholism ruins lives and families just as much as—if not more than—gambling. How long will it be before we hear calls for legally imposed limits on alcohol? That is another question.

Over-regulation almost always proves counterproductive to society at large. This gambling bill is running against the backdrop of the toughest restrictions on our civil liberties and individual rights in our state's history. We should be trying to identify ways to become a freer society, not a more paternalistic one. Practical solutions, not the blunt tools of technocratic overreach should be made the focus of the government policies and programs. As the Queensland government continues to move towards digital service delivery, we should be careful about using real problems to justify the introduction of a mandatory and automated payment system which invariably comes with strings attached.

As the bill's mandatory carded play regulations are rolled out, we will see casinos all over the country collecting more and more data on their patrons, which is exactly what this type of technology was made for: building databases. All over the country the government has everyone building these databases to store as much highly sensitive and personal information as they can lay their hands on. There is absolutely no reason to put someone in a database like this. People are put in a database because they are a criminal.

If people agree to a company's mandatory card system when visiting a casino, it should be limited to a specific use. Agreeing to participate in the company's mandatory card system should absolutely be limited to a specific use. Consent is for a single use. It is not transferrable to other companies, agencies or jurisdictions. This is a human right and civil liberties issue of massive importance. What happens to the information after it has been uploaded and shared with all these shadowy third parties and unnamed stakeholder partners? The public are not being told, but they have a right to know. What safeguards and limitations are being put in place for all these data-sharing arrangements? None—nothing that I could actually see.

As I said earlier today, it is time we started thinking more critically about the issue of rushing to these new technologies without properly assessing their codes and costs and the society-wide impacts.