

Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBIDGEE

MEDIA RELEASE

31 May 2022

Cracking down on the ACT's online gambling problem to minimise harm in our community

This week in the Assembly Dr Paterson will be moving a motion calling for a comprehensive review of online gambling in the ACT.

“While the ACT Government has an extensive reform initiative underway to address harm from poker machines, less focus has gone to addressing the harm from online gambling” she said. “We need to understand more about this type of gambling, and then look at ways to prevent that harm from occurring in the first place.”

In her previous role as an academic researcher, Dr Paterson grew very concerned about the harmful impacts of online gambling. She believes that it's time for more to be done in the ACT to better understand and address the harm caused by online gambling to individuals, families and communities.

Research suggests one in four adult males gamble online in the ACT. We also know that 25% of those people who gamble mostly online in the ACT are classified as at-risk gamblers, experiencing some level of gambling harm.

Further to understanding the harm, Dr Paterson is calling for a greater understanding of the online gambling market in the ACT. She states that “we need a clearer picture of who the companies are that take bets in the ACT, how ACT residents are advertised to, and we need to explore additional revenue streams that can be accessed to ameliorate the harm caused by these companies.

“Australia is one of the biggest gambling markets in the world for these international betting companies” Dr Paterson said. “They take our bets, pay very little tax and contribute absolutely nothing to our community, all the while causing quite significant harm”.

Part of the motion will call on the ACT Government to consider ways to raise community awareness around the risks of online gambling.

Dr Paterson states “we need greater community education, and I would suggest that the online betting industry ameliorate the harm that they cause— so this motion calls on the ACT Government to look to potential revenue streams, for example, increasing the Betting Operations Tax”.

Dr Paterson's motion will call on the Government to report back on these matters by December 2023.

Statement ends

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