

# Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBIDGEE

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Cracking the sporting sponsorship code

Australia's major sporting codes all actively work to improve women and girls' participation in sport. While we still have a long way to go, there are shifts and moves afoot from the local to the professional level to address gender equity in sport.

Just as there are attempts to push a major cultural shift in gender equity in Australian sport, from the Board level, to the wages and facilities that are provided to players, to the behaviour of fans at games, there is more that can be done.

Over the past decade, Australia's sporting codes have increasingly become reliant on advertising revenue from online wagering companies. The extent to which sees advertising contracts worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Aside from the fact that children and young people are exposed to advertising of an adult product that is potentially harmful, there is very little public critique of the actual messages that are being perpetuated through gambling ads in Australia.

Many of these messages from gambling advertising companies reinforce harmful gender stereotypes, something that Dr Paterson wants to see change, "This international Womens day I am calling on sporting codes to reflect on, and address their relationships with betting companies whilst they work to address gender inequality and increase women and girls' participation in sport. Surely it is time to step away from taking money that perpetuates ads on TV that reinforce damaging gender stereotypes?" said Dr Paterson.

It is somewhat ironic that as much as these sports are working to address gender bias and inequality in their sport – they perpetuate advertising that explicitly reinforces stereotypical assumptions of gender that they are trying to counter.

Professional rugby player from the ACT, Louise Burrows says, "Sport is often seen as an opportunity for women to feel respected equal and empowered. Unfortunately, through certain sponsorships displayed on team uniforms and advertising that play on TV throughout sporting games these only perpetuate the gender stereotypes that we work so hard to address. We need to do better, be better now and for the future."

Dr Paterson is passionate about seeing major gambling advertising reform in Australia, she states: "Australians are inundated with gambling ads daily - every 91 seconds on free-to-air TV. And almost all of these ads target men and male traits, male dominated workplaces, male celebrity identities, male cultural, language and behavioural stereotypes. If women are ever depicted, they are hyper-sexualised and passive objects present only to serve the men in the adverts. We know how gender stereotyping reinforces inequalities, promotes sexist behaviour, and attitudes and perpetuates violence against women."

This year for international women day, Dr Paterson will be writing to the Coalition of Major Professional and Participation Sports and all the ACT branches of these sports (Australian Football

League (AFL); • Cricket Australia (CA); • Football Australia (FA); • National Rugby League (NRL); • Netball Australia (NA); • Rugby Australia (RA); and • Tennis Australia (TA).) to express concern about this issue.

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