

Gambling and alcohol industry's election influence tactics exposed...again

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Community and public health groups have expressed concern over reported plans by a lobby group for gambling and alcohol companies to influence the federal election outcome as a way to further stifle public health reform.

[As reported yesterday in the Australian Financial Review](#), the Australian Hotels Association (AHA) plans to funnel tens of thousands of dollars into major political party candidates in electorates facing strong challenges from independents. The report claims the purpose behind this is to “minimise uncertainty of a hostile crossbench”.

Today the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) joins with the Alliance for Gambling Reform (AGR) to renew their call for an end to all political donations from alcohol and gambling companies.

“Once again, we’re seeing alcohol and gambling money woven into our democratic processes with the express aim of slowing or blocking essential reform that would reduce the harm caused by these harmful industries,” FARE Interim CEO Ayla Chorley said.

“We need to see common sense reform that would include a ban on political donations from alcohol companies and their lobby groups.” FARE Interim CEO Ayla Chorley said.

This news comes after figures from the Australian Electoral Commission’s Transparency Register last month revealed that alcohol and gambling companies and lobby groups [donated \\$2.47 million to political parties in 2023-24](#).

CEO of AGR, Martin Thomas said it is appalling that lobby groups continue to influence important government reform, despite widespread community support to better regulate the gambling industry.

“When polls show more than 70% of Australians want a full gambling ad ban, we need better laws around political donations so that powerful interests such as the gambling lobby can’t continue to wield so much political power and hold the nation to ransom.”

“We would urge all candidates at the next federal election to commit to all 31 recommendations of the Murphy parliamentary inquiry into online gambling,” he said.

The AHA’s members represent more than 5000 pubs and hotels, and its corporate partners include multinational alcohol company Diageo, brewers Coopers, Carlton & United, and Lion Beer Australia, and poker machine giants Ainsworth Game Technology, Keno, and Aristocrat.

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