



For Immediate Release – 15 February 2006

**Smoking in public places - An equitable result.**

The Bingo Association is relieved by last night's Commons vote to overturn the proposed partial smoking ban.

The Association has always been in favour of a complete ban, despite the hardship that this will cause the industry there is collective recognition of the need to support the issue of the Nation's health. However, the period of transition from a smoking environment to a non smoking environment will prove to be a trying time for the industry, especially the smaller clubs.

Chairman Sir Peter Fry said;

"We have always had the interests of our customers at heart and want them to remain well and have long lives, but this does not hide the fact that a total ban in its initial years will be one of the greatest challenges that the industry has had to face. This situation going forward will require sympathetic treatment from the Government on regulation and taxation, if the industry is to stand a reasonable chance of survival and success long term.

**- Ends -**

For further press information please contact Steven Baldwin on 01582 860915.

**Notes to Editors:**

- The Bingo Association is the trade association of the licensed bingo industry in Great Britain, representing the proprietors of bingo clubs licensed under the Gaming Act 1968.
- There are 110 proprietors in membership and between them they operate 553 bingo clubs. Membership profile ranges from the very large operators, including Mecca (118 clubs) and Gala (178 clubs), to smaller operators like Castle (9 clubs) and many single unit businesses.
- Around 70% of all Bingo players are women and overall, 10% of all women in the UK play bingo
- There are 3.1 million regular bingo players in the UK
  
- 700 people a year die from second hand smoke in the work place (Imperial College Research)
  
- A total ban will significantly increase the number of smokers giving up (Mintel)
  
- The majority of the general public are in favour of a total ban (BBC Online)
  
- Despite business losses The Bingo Association fully supports a TOTAL ban on smoking in all public places

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