Press release - for immediate release
20 March 2013

Commenting on the Budget, Miles Baron, Chief Executive of The Bingo Association, said:

"The Bingo Association supports any Government focus on economic growth and competitiveness in this year's Budget, welcoming measures introduced that look at further investment. However, the bingo industry is concerned that it has once again been ignored and will not benefit from the measures announced in the Budget.

The bingo industry continues to be subject to an inequitable tax regime, being required to pay a rate of 20% Gross Profits Tax while other forms of gambling (including betting shops and even online bingo sites) pay a rate of 15%. This tax burden is stifling the growth of our industry, remaining the single biggest constraint on the financial viability of bingo clubs, restricting investment and being a significant contributor to the closure of an average of one club per month.

The Government should be more willing to lower taxes when there is direct evidence that it will stimulate growth. Data by Ernst & Young has highlighted that reducing bingo's rate of Gross Profits Tax to 15% would significantly increase revenue to the Exchequer by £35 million over a four year period, in addition to retaining associated employment and safeguarding the social benefits of playing community based games. This would fit in with the Government's growth agenda in a direct and immediate way. The Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee recently recommended that bingo tax be reduced, and The Bingo Association is disappointed that the Government has failed to act on this yet again."

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