



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New Gambling Bill fails to protect the young

Members of The Bingo Association have expressed alarm at the failure of the new Gambling Bill to protect the young, the very group it sought to shield from premature exposure to gambling through fruit machines located in unlicensed premises, such as cafes, chips shops and taxi waiting areas.

New legislation will allow minors into the casinos. While access will be restricted to non-gaming areas, it will put minors in an environment that many believe they would be better excluded from, as per current legislation.

Sir Peter Fry, Chairman of the Association said:

“Minors are currently not allowed to enter any areas of premises licensed for gaming, which ensures that they are well shielded from gambling and other activities that may be present in such environments.

“The determination of American casino operators to dominate the post de-regulation UK casino market only further heightens concerns about minors in gambling environments. US large resort casinos, like those found in Las Vegas, have been found to attract other un-regulated types of adult entertainment, which despite security attempts to keep them out have failed and are unofficially recognised as part of the environment. This is something which to date has not been significantly present in UK gaming. Should Government facilitate the large scale entry of US operators into the UK market, this situation is unlikely to remain unchanged. Such a move, with minors in the environment, flies in the face of Government’s much touted stance on the need to protect the ‘young and vulnerable’.

“I do not feel that such a move serves any positive purpose for any of the parties interested in UK gaming de-regulation and can only assume that this highly inappropriate aspect of the Bill is another example of how little consideration the Bill has been given. It is vital that such clauses be amended to ensure that the new legislation enacted does not destroy as much as it creates.”

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Notes to Editors

For further information contact:

The Bingo Association
Steven Baldwin
01582 860915
07939 241164
steven@bingo-association.co.uk

About The Bingo Association:

The Bingo Association is the trade body for the licensed bingo industry in Great Britain, representing the proprietors of bingo clubs licensed under the Gaming Act 1968. The purpose of The Bingo Association is to promote and develop the interests of the licensed bingo industry and to represent members' interests in contacts with third parties, in particular with various government departments, other trade associations and the media.

There are 110 proprietors in membership and between them they operate 538 bingo clubs. Membership profile ranges from the very large operators with well over 100 clubs, to many single unit businesses.

www.bingo-association.co.uk

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