



E-mail: consultation.lagb@treasury.tas.gov.au

Submission of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, Uniting Church in Australia on the Gaming Control (Community Support Fund) Regulations 2022 6 July 2022

The Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, Uniting Church in Australia, welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the *Gaming Control (Community Support Fund) Regulations 2022*. We support most of the provisions in the regulations, in line with our previous responses to the survey on the Community Support Fund.

The members of the Synod's congregations have been concerned for a long time about the harm that certain forms of gambling are causing in our communities. At the 1999 meeting of representatives of the congregations, they passed a resolution stating:

To call on the State Government to implement strong consumer protection measures for gamblers through legislation to stop their exploitation by the gambling industry, including:

- (i) the establishment of adequately resourced, independent bodies to provide consumer protection for gamblers and to enforce legislation and regulations for consumer protection;*
- (ii) the provision for local government veto over the number of machines and new gaming venues; and*
- (iii) the provision of increased funding for recreational alternatives to gambling.*

We support 4(a), (b) and (c) of the Regulations in terms of the distribution of funds from the Community Support Fund. As per our response to the survey on the Community Support Fund, we only support 4(d) where the distribution of funding would be related to preventing gambling-related harm or addressing gambling-related harms that have occurred. We urge that the wording of 4(d) be amended to reflect that requirement.

It would be our preference that the Community Support Fund be administered by an independent board, similar to the Tasmanian Community Fund, which operates under the *Tasmanian Community Fund Act 2005*.

The Regulations should exclude businesses, persons and organisations that run gambling activities from being recipients of funding from the Community Support Fund.

The Regulations should exclude any business, organisation or person who has made political donations, in cash or in-kind, from receiving funding from the Community Support Fund as an integrity measure over the allocation of the funds.

The allocation of funds from the Community Support Fund should be disclosed in an annual public report, noting that there have already been annual disclosure of projects funded by the Community Support Levy.

Dr Mark Zirnsak
Senior Social Justice Advocate
Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
Uniting Church in Australia

