

Media Release
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**“Next NSW Government needs to commit to a winning bet for gamblers”
NSW State Election**

Responsible Gambling Fund Chairperson and Executive Director of UnitingCare NSW.ACT, Reverend Harry Herbert, today called on the major political parties to back the mandatory pre-commitment system to help gamblers get back on track.

“A pre-commitment gambling system is a winning bet to help problem gamblers fight addiction and regain control over their lives.

“The Productivity Commission estimates that problem gamblers currently contribute 40% of clubs’ profits. This system will force them to allocate the amount of money they are willing to lose,” Mr Herbert explained.

The Federal Government wants all States to agree to gambling reforms, including the introduction of a mandatory pre-commitment system, by 31 May 2011.

“The next NSW Government will have eight weeks to decide – but surely it is a no-brainer if they really want to make a difference to improving the health and well-being not only of gamblers, but the many families, friends, employers and communities who are all affected by their addiction.

“We have to stop this ‘profits before people’ mentality – so why not agree to the reforms prior to the deadline,” asks Mr Herbert.

As the head of one of the largest community services organisations in NSW, Mr Herbert is passionate about the NSW Government becoming serious about the role they can take to curb problem gambling.

“Many of our services assist people not only with the fallout from problem gambling, but the root causes.”

Mr Herbert continued, saying that the organisation was also advocating in the lead up to the State Election in March for NSW to commit to leading the rest of the States in implementing the system by 2014 in accordance with the Productivity Commission's recommendations.

To view UnitingCare NSW.ACT's recommendations for the NSW State Election please visit www.withoutfearorfavour.org.au/speak_out.

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For more information or to interview Reverend Harry Herbert, Executive Director, UnitingCare NSW.ACT, please contact Ingrid Hoff, Media and Communication Officer, on 02 9376 1415 or ingridh@nsw.uca.org.au.