

MEDIA RELEASE

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CASHLESS CARD – ‘UNPROVEN, UNTESTED, UN-COSTED & UNNECESSARY’

Today's NSW Crime Commission Report has found no widespread evidence hotel gaming machines are being used to clean 'dirty money'.

"The Crime Commission agreed with what we have said for some time – that the cleaning of the proceeds of crime is not widespread in NSW pubs," AHA NSW CEO John Whelan said.

"To then, at the same time, have the Crime Commission call for all cash to suddenly be banned in venues is an unjustified overreach.

"We have an industry on its knees post-COVID now being told to introduce an unproven, untested, un-costed and unnecessary cashless system which treats every patron like a criminal.

"This is the type of misguided, sledgehammer approach which has resulted in past 'policy on the run' failures like the ill-fated greyhound ban and the now infamous lockout laws which crippled Sydney's night-life for years.

"The Crime Commission has found using EGMs to clean dirty money is not widespread, so there is no reason why the use of cash should be banned - it makes no logical sense.

"There is no justification for government to monitor the recreational spending of the law-abiding people of NSW. If criminals are the problem, let's target them.

"Only two weeks ago the NSW Government started a cashless gaming trial. Surely this and other planned trials need to be completed and assessed?"

Mr Whelan said the AHA would be supportive of a call by the Commission to reduce EGM cash load-up limits in an effort to stop criminals using machines.

"Hotels do not want criminals in venues - and we will work closely with Government, police and the community on common-sense measures which will actually work such as facial recognition to identify and ban criminals," he said.

"Combined with a lower cash input limit, this will be the most effective way to prevent illegal money being spent in venues."

“The AHA NSW is committed to working with government and police but there are better ways to target the small percentage of the population who are criminals – without destroying jobs, community facilities and have government monitoring the spending of the law-abiding public.

“Having millions of patrons forced to give up their personal details to be monitored should be a last step not a first one – especially with news today of yet another data breach affecting millions of Australians.”

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