



MEDIA RELEASE

HON ROBERT BROKENSHERE MLC

FAMILY FIRST
The Independent Party



FAMILY FIRST LAMENTS GAMBLING REHAB NEGLECT IN PORT PIRIE

Monday 17 November 2008

FAMILY FIRST MLC Robert Brokenshere has continued on the attack against Government dithering over the funding of gambling rehabilitation counselling across South Australia, pointing out that in Port Pirie it was stretching counselling services to the limit.

“FAMILY FIRST [asked the Gambling Minister last week in Parliament](#) why non-government organisations (NGOs) had to get their funding requests in by 30 June 2008, yet here we are in mid-November with no certainty of their funding”, Mr Brokenshere complained.

“What this means, on the ground, is that NGOs across the State – including in Port Pirie – are not able to hold staff because there is no certainty their counselling jobs will continue to be funded. Then, if those staff leave those jobs, the NGO won’t fill it because they won’t bother advertising a job with only 3 months’ certainty of continuing employment”

“NGOs all over the State are being stretched to the limit by a review process which had a questionable basis in the first place”, Mr Brokenshere added, “the Government needs to tell us why it started this process in the first place – something you would only do if you were unhappy with the service being provided by the NGOs”

Mr Brokenshere noted that the Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund, administered by the Minister for Families Communities, decides where funding is spent and whilst it was keeping NGOs hanging on, it had:

- failed to spend \$2m in unallocated funding;
- found \$300,000 to pay the Government’s preferred advertising agency; and
- found \$10,000 to pay for a program in Adelaide for multicultural prostitute problem gamblers;

“This is a process lacking transparency and, appallingly, sees the money there but the Government is testing its relationship with the hard-working and decent people in the counselling sector who just want to know if their problem gambling clients will keep getting treatment, and whether their jobs will continue to be funded”