



ST BARNABAS PROMOTIONS LIMITED

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12 January 2004

Rt. Hon. Douglas Hogg QC, M.P.
Member of Parliament for Sleaford and North Hykeham
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear *Douglas*

Re: New Gambling Bill

We are writing to you to voice our concerns about the new Gambling Bill. The draft Bill is currently before the joint committee chaired by John Greenway and has commenced the pre-legislative scrutiny procedure. We are most concerned that in its present form it will affect the St Barnabas lottery which we operate locally to raise funds for the Hospice and all its services, given freely to the people of Lincolnshire. We are a registered charity based in Lincolnshire and operate a Society Lottery as a vital part of our fundraising.

X In order to operate our lottery legally, we are required to register with the Gaming Board, have a registered vetted Promoter, observe legally binding limits on spending, submit a return form for every individual lottery and, above all, prove that we donate to a good and worthy cause. We have to operate under the strict regime of the 1976 Lotteries And Amusements Act, which imposes harsh penalties for minor infringements in lottery management. We do fully support and are more than happy to accept the legislation as long as ALL Lotteries are governed in the same way.

X We have now learned that the Government proposes to permit the operation of unlicensed lotteries for commercial gain, provided they contain "a degree of skill or knowledge". This could take the form of "Who works in a Fire Station?" All who get the answer correct, go into the prize draw." We are greatly concerned that these kinds of promotions will be able to proliferate in areas in which we are prohibited by law from operating, as well as in our traditional sales areas.

Suggestions from the DCMS that Society Lotteries move into prize competitions is not helpful. Those companies that run these competitions can set up one day and close down the next, and then re-invent themselves the next week to avoid any scrutiny. Our Charity cannot do this. Being associated with a "for Profit" sector, exploiting the public could be a stigma from which the Charity could never recover.

Is this a level playing field?

Society Lotteries

Require registration

Have to operate with limits on stake money/prizes & expenses

Have to pay at least 20% to the good cause

Cannot be sold to or by a person under the age of 16

Cannot be sold in the street or public place unless from a Kiosk

Lottery offences, even minor ones can carry criminal convictions

Prize Competitions

No registration required

No Limits

No donation required

No restriction on age

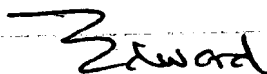
No restrictions apply

Very unlikely competition infringements will be treated as criminal offences, other than fraud

We consider these proposals to be not only unfair, but also a potential threat to our fundraising. If the Government stands by its statement that "*A scheme that a degree of skill or knowledge is needed in order to secure a prize will not, therefore, be capable of being a lottery*", we fear a proliferation of minimal skill schemes operated by shops, supermarkets, bookmakers and direct mail promoters all taking custom away from our fundraising lottery.

Would you please speak up on our behalf, as the New Gambling Bill goes through the various committee stages. We would be pleased to meet with you to explain our position in more detail and if you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely



W E Bliss, CBE
Chairman of Trustees