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Members of Showman's Guild and B.A.C.T.A.

25 March 2004

Mr David Millaband MP
Ede House
143 Westoe Road
South Shields
NE33 3PD

Dear Mr Millaband

I operate as a retailer of amusement and gaming machines in the South Shields Area and employ 40 people. As my local MP I have decided to write to you to express both some general and specific concerns that I have with the proposed Bill in its current format and that have been highlighted by the Report.

My concerns are:

- The proposed new style casino resort complexes will be so vastly superior in terms of size, range of new product offered etc that new and existing visitors will naturally gravitate towards these 'emporiums', slowly destroying much of the existing seaside economy. Resort and large casinos will be adult gambling environments providing scant impetus for social and tourism led regeneration.
- FEC's/Category D machines. The Bill allows a discretion to introduce an age restriction for Category D machines by means of secondary legislation. Such a move would appear likely to 'wipe-out' the seaside entertainment's industry. This potential change will make future investment in the industry an unrealistic prospect. This position is totally unacceptable to as it will significantly affect many members who have for many years provided much needed investment into the coastal resorts.

I hope that you will be able to make representation to the Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP, Cabinet Minister ultimately responsible, Lord McIntosh of Haringey, the Minister with responsibility for the Bill, John Greenway MP, Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee.

I do hope that you are able to help us by contacting the Minister and members of the Scrutiny Committee, and I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely

Mr Kenneth Reader