

# **Pastimes (Hornsea) Limited**

Established 1927

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9 March 2004

James Cran MP  
House of Commons  
London  
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Dear James

### Proposed Gambling Bill

With regards to the above proposal, I operate as you know two seaside amusement arcades and employ over 50 people including our popular Wilbur's market. The arcades contain Gaming Machines of a mixed variety to attract and entertain all family members. We have an outstanding reputation of catering for all ages and have a following of family generations having been established for over 76 years in Hornsea. There is no doubt that the arcades are an attraction to our town and help to benefit other businesses all the year round.

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:-

### Grandfather Rights

The Bill does not include measures reflecting the assurances given by Lord McIntosh in his speech to the BACTA Convention 2003, that the existing Industry would not be endangered. In most cases the future of these business (whether they be seaside amusements, adult gaming centres or machines being operated in public houses) could be left to the discretion of Local Authorities which may unilaterally decide not to grant permits to businesses that may have been operating for generations and there is no right of appeal. This would be totally unacceptable to BACTA and we seek confirmation that the final draft will incorporate these matters.

### Remedy

*Grant "Grandfather Rights" to existing businesses in perpetuity, providing they operate within all relevant legislation and codes of conduct.*

### Traditional Seaside Businesses

FEC's/Category D machines. This bill allows discretion to introduce an age restriction for Category D Machines by means of a secondary legislation\*. Such a move would appear likely to "wipe out" the seaside entertainment industry. There are no grounds for this measure as our research (ORB) has shown. This potential change will make future investments in the industry an unrealistic prospect. This position is totally unacceptable to BACTA as it will significantly affect many members who have for many years provided much needed investment into the coastal resorts.

\*The draft contains wide discretion for the introduction of many restrictions which would fundamentally undermine the industry and appear not to be the subject of consultation.

### Remedy

*Remove the enabling clause, allowing an age restriction for Category D Machines only through Primary legislation with full consultation, should evidence from research prove that a change is required.*

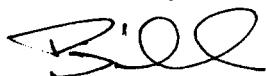
*I hope that you will be able to make representation to the Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP, Cabinet Minister ultimately responsible, Lord McIntosh of Haringey, the Minister with responsibility for the Bill and John Greenway MP, Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee.*

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

Should you wish for any more information I can give you please do not hesitate to inform me, I will be most happy to oblige. Our business and our Town have been my lifes work and I would be devastated if we should lose it for the family and staff;s sake.

We will be sorry to see you retire James, may Good Health and Happiness be with you throughout your future days, Kindest regards.

Yours sincerely



W E Underwood Esq. MBE

