

38 Degrees submission: consultation on proposals for changes to Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility Measures

Summary

Over 150,000 members of the public have signed 38 Degrees petitions calling on the Department of Digital, Culture Media and Sport to crack down on addictive betting machines and adverts, and cut the maximum bet allowed on FOBTs from £100 to £2.

38 Degrees members have also shared their stories of the harm addictive gambling machines have caused in their lives.

These signatures comprise of:

- 137,514 members of 38 Degrees who have signed a petition calling for Tracey Crouch to crack down on fixed odds betting terminals (FOBTs). [1] The full text of the petition reads as follows:

To: Tracey Crouch, Minister for Gambling
Cut the maximum bet allowed on addictive betting machines

- An earlier petition, submitted to the Department's call for evidence and signed by 107,108 members of 38 Degrees, called for the government to get tough on gambling companies and crack down on addictive betting machines and gambling adverts. [2] The full text of the petition is as follows:

To: Tracey Crouch, Minister for Gambling
Crack down on addictive betting machines and adverts.

Altogether, 156,024 people have taken part in the campaign by adding their name to one or both petitions.

Betting machines, that let people gamble £100 every 20 seconds thousands of gambling addictions across the UK. They're devastating and can tear families apart.

As part of the campaign asking the government to crack down on these machines, hundreds of 38 Degrees members shared their personal stories of the harm gambling addiction and addictive betting machines in particular can cause. Here are just some of the stories they shared:

"My family and marriage business and nearly our home was lost to machine gambling"

"I have worked for 28 years in the addiction treatment system and have become aware in the last ten years the increase in people presenting with addiction problems related to Fixed Odd Betting Terminals. These machines benefit the very few and cause harm to many, not just those who use the machines but to the families of users who suffer financial and emotional hardship purely due to another's desire to get rich by contributing nothing to our society."

"My husband is addicted to gambling on slot machines. He is a pensioner and gambles away more than 90% of his pension"

"I've been affected by fruit machines in the past, lost my job because of the gambling, it is so addictive hard to stop."

"My son lives a hermit life going nowhere that has machines as he is addicted to gambling."

"I work in mental health and have a client whose life is being ruined by gambling and particularly mentions the machines as being the most damaging to people. The gambling blocks us from being able to treat his mental illness."

"I have been addicted to using gambling machines in the past, many years ago, it was hard to get out of the addiction then, it's even worse now as the machines are harder to resist."

"A friend nearly lost his whole life due to these machines."

[1] 38 Degrees: Crack down on addictive betting machines:

<https://38d.gs/betting-machines>

[2] 38 Degrees: Get tough on gambling companies:

https://38d.gs/gambling_companies