



Rebekha Sharkie MP

Federal Member for Mayo



MEDIA RELEASE

Sharkie calls for gambling giants to help fund regional sporting infrastructure

Federal Member for Mayo Rebekha Sharkie is calling on the Government to consider making highly profitable gambling companies contribute to a dedicated community benefit fund to help upgrade ageing sporting infrastructure across regional Australia.

Ms Sharkie has asked the Minister for Sport and Communications whether the Government would consider legislating for gambling companies to finance a community benefit fund, recognising the enormous profits generated from sports betting while many community sporting clubs struggle to maintain facilities.

“Across regional Australia, community sporting clubs are being asked to do more with facilities that are increasingly outdated, overcrowded and simply not fit for purpose,” Ms Sharkie said.

“These clubs are at the heart of our communities. They provide opportunities for children and adults to participate in sport, build friendships, volunteer and stay connected.

“But many are trying to run growing clubs out of facilities that were built decades ago.

“I think it’s reasonable to ask an industry that makes enormous profits to contribute more directly to the grassroots organisations that underpin the sports that this industry benefits from.”

In the Mayo electorate, Ms Sharkie said a number of clubs have an urgent need for investment in community sporting infrastructure.

These include the Strathalbyn and Districts Basketball Association and Strikers Soccer Club, the McLaren Districts Soccer Club, the Stirling Tennis Club, the Yankalilla Football Club, the Encounter Bay Bowling Club and the Meadows Bowling Club.

“Whether it’s new change rooms, extra courts, safer lighting or a solar and battery system, grant funding can make a huge difference to whether a club can grow, stay affordable and continue welcoming new members.

“Volunteers shouldn’t have to spend their time trying to patch up facilities that are simple no longer adequate for their communities.

“If gambling companies are making billions from Australians betting on sport, I believe we should at least consider whether they have a responsibility to help ensure community sport has the facilities it needs to thrive.”

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