

**Casino (Amendment) Bill 2012**  
**Second Reading approved**

3.3. Mr Henderson to move:

*That the Casino (Amendment) Bill 2012 be read the second time.*

**The Speaker:** We turn now to the Casino (Amendment) Bill, and again I call Mr Henderson.

**Mr Henderson:** Gura mie eu, Vainstyr Loayreyder.

Online gambling is one of the Manx economy's recent success stories. The Department of Economic Development has identified a significant and important opportunity to capitalise on the excellent foundations that the gambling sector has established here by allowing the staging of live gaming tournaments. This is an important business opportunity to grow the Island's economy and a chance to assist in mitigating the negative effects of the VAT reductions from the sharing arrangement we had with the UK.

It will also pave the way for other initiatives. Live gaming tournaments are competitions in which players come together in a single location and compete against one another to win prizes. They are very high profile events in the gambling world and usually attract significant comment and coverage from the gaming community. They are typically televised and often make celebrities of their most successful participants. A typical tournament attracts a large number of participants, as well as spectators and organisers and it is important that the venue chosen is large enough to accommodate the visitors. Tournaments held in the UK and Ireland last year by a local e-gaming company attracted between 500 and 1,000 players each time.

Live tournaments can take place in the Isle of Man already, but they must be held in the permanent premises of a casino or directly adjacent to it. This naturally limits the size of any tournament that can be held. In order to facilitate larger live tournaments this amendment Bill proposes that premises other than those belonging to a casino can be temporarily used for the purposes of gambling. With this legislation the casino licence holder would be able to enter into a business agreement with any tournament provider to provide a venue of any size to suit the tournament.

The Isle of Man has some splendid facilities, which would provide many suitable venues for such events. If this Bill is enacted, it is proposed that the Gambling Supervision Commission will be permitted to issue temporary premises certificates, which allow the casino to use a venue other than its own facilities, in order to host a live tournament. Such a tournament would be extremely advantageous for the Isle of Man's economy. Visitors would utilise local accommodation and retail outlets, as well as the transport links to and from the Island. The extra business opportunities created for casino licenceholders would allow for business development and greater revenue.

As with the expansion of any activity, safeguards must be put in place to ensure that the interests of citizens and consumers are protected. The Isle of Man Gambling Supervision Commission has established an enviable global reputation for the strength and quality of its regulation and it is through regulation that citizens and consumers in the Isle of Man will continue to be protected if this Bill is enacted.

Regulation will exist to allow unsuitable tournaments to be declined by the Commission. Tournaments will need to be advertised in good time and citizens who have concerns about a particular venue will be able to write objecting.

The laws that govern minimum age and standards of conduct within an Isle of Man casino will be the same in the temporary premises and the inspection regime will operate to the same standard.

Mr Speaker, given the favourable feedback from the public consultation and the potential benefits that I have outlined today, I am very pleased to be able to promote this Bill which supports the Isle of Man and all those who choose to do business with us, and I beg to move that the Casino (Amendment) Bill 2012 be read a second time, sir.

**The Speaker:** Mr Teare.

**Mr Teare:** I beg to second, sir, and to reserve my remarks.

**The Speaker:** Hon. Member for Douglas East, Mrs Cannell.

**Mrs Cannell:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Can I ask the Hon. Member for North Douglas moving this legislation who he, or the Department responsible for this, consulted with? Did it go out to public consultation? If so, to whom?

If he can give us an idea of whether or not... He talked about the temporary licence, that if a temporary licence was granted it could be beneficial to the Island in terms of a boost to our economy, our retail sector,

hotels, etc etc. Can he advise as to whether or not there is any interest been expressed in this area? Indeed, is there anybody in the pipeline who would wish to apply for such a temporary licence?

**The Speaker:** Mr Henderson to reply.

**Mr Henderson:** Gura mie eu, Vainstyr Loayreyder.

I thank the Hon. Member for her questions. I am just checking the consultation summary, and the simple answer is yes, as I indicated in the opening brief, that consultation had taken place and with various and numerous, including all Hon. Members here.

The consultation, basically, although we have not got a list of consultees here, I can have that circulated to Hon. Members for the record, but favourable, and people were quite interested.

Also, the other part of the Hon. Member's question is that the industry is very interested in this and it opens up an opportunity for the Island and, as such, it would seem that, to use this vehicle is the way forward to provide those opportunities and work up the interest from the industry itself, Vainstyr Loayreyder.

**The Speaker:** I put the motion that the Casino (Amendment) Bill be read for a second time. Those in favour, please say aye; against, no. The ayes have it.

*A division was called for and electronic voting resulted as follows:*

FOR	AGAINST
Mr Hall	Mr Anderson
Mr Karran	Mrs Cannell
Mr Ronan	
Mr Crookall	
Mr Bell	
Mr Singer	
Mr Quayle	
Mr Teare	
Mr Cannan	
Mr Cregeen	
Mr Henderson	
Mrs Beecroft	
Mr Shimmin	
Mr Corkish	
Mr Cretney	
Mr Watterson	
Mr Skelly	
Mr Gawne	
The Speaker	

**The Speaker:** With 19 for, 2 votes against, the motion therefore carries.