

Queensland Legislative Assembly
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Professional punter takes \$100,000 gamble on Queensland Greens

NEWS

The largest political donation in an election year goes to the party with only one MP in state parliament – for now.



Photo: ABC

Professional gambler and secretive maths genius Duncan Turpie donated \$100,000 to the Greens at the end of June, four months ahead of the state election.



His contribution to the minor party came amid an ongoing debate over Palaszczuk Government restrictions on donations and campaign expenditure, which the Liberal National Party has argued will advantage Labor.

It is the largest single donation to a political party since the union United Voice gave \$259,249 to Labor in May last year, before the pandemic led the Government to impose a pay freeze.

Queensland Greens MP Michael Berkman, the Member for Maiwar, has long criticised the influence of major party donors and government support for casino developments.

“The political power of the gambling industry more broadly is well-established and is powered in large part by their hefty donations to both Labor and the Liberal / National parties in Queensland and around Australia,” Berkman wrote in a 2018 parliamentary submission.

“One particularly striking local example is the Queens Wharf mega-casino development in Brisbane. The Committee will be aware of the very significant community concerns regarding corporate influence in the approval of the Queens Wharf.”

In the same year, Queensland Labor Senator and former party state secretary Anthony Chisholm used parliamentary privilege to accuse Turpie of being part of the Punters Club, a gambling syndicate pursued by the Australian Tax Office.

“The Greens virtue signalling on political donations is yet another example of the rank hypocrisy that has come to characterise the Greens,” Chisholm told federal parliament.

At the state election, the Greens are hoping to hold Maiwar and secure another seat, possibly South Brisbane, the electorate of former deputy premier Jackie Trad.