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### **SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO ALCOHOL-RELATED VIOLENCE**

Mike Horan, Member for Toowoomba South

Over time the liquor industry has had access to increased hours and increased opportunity for revenue. Thus the traditional hours of 10 am to 10 pm have mostly changed to 10 am to 2 am or 10 am to 3 am. A small number of hotels in city areas remain on 10 pm to 12 pm.

Hotel revenue streams have been expanded to include poker machines, food, bottle shops and bars and off site bottle shops.

The cabaret or nightclub industry has generally remained as an entertainment industry, with hours of evening to 3 am (lock-out) or 5 am.

The statistic that approximately 20% of liquor is consumed on licensed premises and 80% is consumed elsewhere (probably mostly at home) is an important point to consider in determining education and social values as a tool to restrict and prevent alcohol related violence.

Those who have to manage our city streets, particularly the police, know very clearly that the later the hours, the more the trouble. I have spoken with experienced police and they are unequivocal in this opinion.

There has been a trend for young people to leave it till late to go out, sometimes consuming liquor at their residence before venturing out. Additionally generations have been de-sensitised to violence through T.V., films, computer games and mobile phone cameras.

The culture of heavy and fast drinking is another development that fuels "drinking to get drunk" and violence of different forms.

The practicality of counteracting all of this is difficult but there needs to be a stop to the ever increasing creep of extended hours.

Young people have a right to go out and socialise safely and happily, but late hours and alcohol puts them at greater risk of harm.

The cultures outlined that have developed can only be offset by a contemporary, well thought out and fully implemented education program.

This program should be targeted at parents and secondary school students for maximum effect and benefit.

I recommend that the committee looks at the program developed by Toowoomba Lawyer Adair Donaldson of Province Lawyers. I have previously provided briefings on this to Government.

This program is now in a number of schools and is used by national football codes.

It is hard-hitting, confronting, but real. It teaches parents the realities and dangers of activities like gate-crashing and out of control parties.

It teaches young men and women the realities of alcohol fuelled violence and sex and it teaches the tragic consequences of drink-driving, particularly in rural areas.

There is community concern about cultural changes in drinking and violence, and it does need an education program such as the one I am aware of, and have detailed, to have an immediate effect and response on young people who are in the midst of social activity and at most risk.

A longer term strategy of developing a culture of respect for others and responsibility for your actions, needs to be built into our education system or supported and enhanced where already operating.

School Chaplaincy can assist this process and should always be supported by each school community backed by government investment.

The Edmund Rice tradition of education through the Christian Brothers provided daily lessons on "being a Christian gentleman". Such a system may well be in place in some schools but I believe it is essential to provide this type of life and social education to develop a considerate and caring community.

I have attempted to provide some practical examples of education. As a society we cannot walk away from this need.

This parliamentary committee must put in place recommendations that are practical, have real effect and can happen.

I wish the committee well in its consideration of this important matter.

Yours sincerely



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