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Subject: ONLINE SUBMISSION - Alcohol-Related Violence in Queensland
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ONLINE SUBMISSION - Inquiry into alcohol-related violence

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Any other Comments:

To the Comittee, I am not in a position to offer any empirical evidence or research on these issues however I would like to offer a couple of very simple personal observations for your consideration. 1. QUEENSLAND LICENCED PREMISES PRIMARILY FOCUSED ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION RATHER THAN SOCIAL ACTIVITIES. I lived in Japan for a number of years and noticed that alcohol consumption is very popular there as it is here in Australia. Whilst I was in Japan I noticed that the types of venues in which people drink are quite different to our venues here in Queensland. Many venues are much smaller, sometimes with seating for as little as 10 people. Often these small venues arre focussed on a particular interest or leisure activity, many people run a small bar as a Hobby or after hours job. These bars tend to revolve around the underlying interest or theme. for example the bar may be devoted to James Brown music, or Darts, or The Beatles, or Video games. There are literally thousands of these types of smaller venues. One of the most popular types of drinking establishments is the Karaoke booth, usually a small room hired by groups of no more than 30 people or so where drinks are served as friends sing together. Many Cinemas in Japan also serve Alcohol. The key point here is that there is often a focus other than just simply drinking for drinkings sake. As a result patrons naturally interact in a more positive environment. By contrast many of our venues are large and impersonal spaces, you are screened at the door by an often aggressive or intimidating security guard and then the drinking takes place in a large crowd, it is often difficult conduct any kind of communication within the venue due to the noise level and the main focus, promoted by the operators is drinking itself. It is an environment that I suspect may be a catalyst to violence. Perhaps it would be interesting to compare how much violence we see at small country pubs where people gather to socialise compared to our crowded city venues. It may be worthwhile considering ways to foster and encourage a more positive drinking environment. 2. TOLERANCE OF ALCOHOL RELATED VIOLENCE BY SOCIETY AND LEGAL SYSTEM Alcohol related violence has become a popular topic pursued by the media and our political leaders. Are we inadvertantly creating a self fulfilling prophesy by telling people that we expect them to become violent when they drink too much? Shouldn't we be telling people that we simply do not tolerate violence and consuming any amount of Alcohol is not an excuse for engaging in socially unacceptable behaviour. The courts and our lawmakers must have a role to play here, I suspect that deep down there is still an expectation that a youngster who has gone out, had a few too many and got into a blue should expect to be treated fairly leniently. Perhaps it is time to challenge this idea in a similar way to how we have approached the once much more socially accepted crime of drink driving. I wish you well with your investigation into this challenging issue. Dean McNulty Springwood Electorate