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28 OCT 2009

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From: webmaster@parliament.qld.gov.au
Sent: Tuesday, 27 October 2009 2:36 PM
To: Law, Justice and Safety Committee
Subject: ONLINE SUBMISSION - Alcohol-Related Violence in Queensland
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Red

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ONLINE SUBMISSION - Inquiry into alcohol-related violence

Name: Luke Geurtsen
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State: QLD**Best practice harm minimisation measures:**

1. Irrelevant. This first point emphasises the bias causing all the problem here. It is the policy of those in the position to make policy for this government to always look for and blame external factors rather than expect an individual to take responsibility for their action. Until this approach is adjusted you will never find a solution! 2. and 3. Better identification of patrons has proven to be beneficial. Privacy does not equal anonymity. Patrons have a right to have their personal information protected from exploitation but not a right not to be known or identified. I would prefer facial recognition cameras to ID scanning as facial recognition always for identification of banned patrons and the club only needs the photo not the patron's personal details. Glass bans have also proven to be an unfortunate necessity. Glassing have been increasing the world over. Better standards need to be enforced in relation to the service of alcohol in terms of volume. For example how much alcohol, ice and mixer there should be in a standard drink. What size glass bars must serve standard drinks in. Patrons should be safe in their knowledge that one standard drink is the same in any bar. So they can properly keep tabs on themselves. Many bars serve in small glasses with far too much ice so that patrons drink faster and more often. 4. What doesn't work is the current policy maker's attitude of ignoring the elephants in the room! The party drug problem is out of control and many of the drugs being mixed with alcohol DO influence the violence that is occurring. Simply blaming all the violence on alcohol and denying any drug problem is not working. Also, the softly softly approach is not working. It's great for buying liberal left votes and it's great for not needed to properly fund the courts, prisons and police but it comes at a huge costs to the community in every sense. People need to be made responsible for their actions. Giving violent drunks a notice to appear, so that they can be back at the scene of the crime within hours of an arrest is not a discouragement. Given offenders a distant court date and a slap on the wrist is not a deterrent. Why should all law abiding citizens face the same wowsing crack down for the actions of a few offenders - who don't take the consequences anyway? During the 80s and 90s Queenslanders were drinking far more cheap drinks, enjoying pub sponsored drinking games yet we had far less of a violence problem. Cutting down on cheap drinks and promotions hasn't stopped the violent and sexual assaults. Being soft on offenders has encouraged them.

The impact of late opening hours:

5. Extended trading hours cause problems! We do not have all police, ambulance, health and public transport workers working all hours of the day. Cities need down time. Extended trading hours put strains on all these services (at penalty rates) and do not allow for proper down time. Even with the new fees, extended trading hours approvals cost the government much larger amounts of money. 6. Most people do not understand the lock-out. The lock-out means that rather than everyone being tuffed out of all the clubs at 5a.m., many have been forced to go home earlier. It also reduces bar hopping. People being refused alcohol at a venue after 3a.m. now have to go home rather than simply keep trying at other venues. 7. Extended trading hours (and higher drink prices) encourages young people (the largest consumers of alcohol) to stay at home and drink unmeasured amounts of alcohol. Most operates of venues will admit that many of the late night patrons are already intoxicated before they even arrive at the pubs and clubs. 8. Shorter trading hours. Simply look at what has happened since we brought in extended trading approval fees, the government has been handing out more of them. Seeking the fee revenue despite the direct increase in costs to the community and to other government services such as health and police. Reducing alcohol service during these times will not stop the problem. Patrons are already drunk by this time and many are hyped up on party drugs. I suspect many venues should actually take a look at the most profitable hours, and the late hours would probably not do well.

Flow-on issues for emergency service workers, police, and frontline health workers:

9. I have already mentioned the impact of extended trading hours in that they do not allow for these service to have a down time. Not to mention the extra insult to these people when offenders are given a slap on the wrist. 10. We need extra penalties for assaults on police and health workers. Also public transport workers at night. We also 'need' to make sure these penalties are enforced. I am all to aware of politicians praising themselves for putting a new offence on the statute book only to overlook that the new offence is not enforced, or prosecutions are not funded. Also need to look at intoxication and drug influence being used as a mitigating factor. The fact that someone choose to drink to much and mix it with drugs does not mitigate what the victim goes through during a violent assault!

Education campaigns and their role in cultivating effective social change in terms of community attitudes to alcohol consumption:

11. - 14. I have seen this policy being ridiculously pushed in government. It is an insult to every honest law abiding Queenslander and a large part of why this government, despite trying, has been completely unable to do anything to stop this

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problem increasing! Put simply this approach is a nonsense! Any campaign simply can not compete with the glamorous message of drugs and alcohol being put forward by mass media. How on earth the government thinks a few million dollar campaign is going to compete with multi-billion dollar advertising campaigns and pop culture media is beyond me. Making people aware of how much is too much for their health is a good idea. Making them aware of where to get help if they think they have a problem is a good idea. Making them aware that there will be legal consequences if they break the law is a great idea. Making people feel they are morally bad because they enjoy having social drinks does nothing but alienate citizens from government and certainly does nothing to discourage the real trouble makers.

The role of parents in influencing attitudes towards alcohol consumption:

15. There may be a problem of parents enabling drink problems with children. However, taking a wowsy approach will not help either. Children need to learn responsible attitudes to drinking from their parents, they do not learn that from parents who prevent them from ever knowing anything about alcohol. Making alcohol a taboo will only make it all the more appealing to children. Simply look at cultural attitudes to alcohol in other countries. Many in Europe have a lower drinking age and children are encouraged to participate to a degree and they have far less of a problem.

The economic cost of alcohol-related violence:

17. The economic cost is huge in terms of health services, emergency services, policing services and court time. They far outweigh the revenue from licensing fees. Not to mention that it is also hurting our international image and thus, tourism. 18. Heavier financial penalties for offenders. Giving bars the ability to ban patrons. Giving police and the courts the ability to ban offender from entire venues. Compulsory installation of facial recognition for the ability to recognise trouble makers and better ability to identify offenders when something does go wrong.