

6 October 2021

Committee Secretary

State Development and Regional Industries Committee

Parliament House

BRISBANE QLD 4000

Via email to: sdric@parliament.qld.gov.au & bancroft@parliament.qld.gov.au

Response to the Justice Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response — Permanency) Amendment Bill 2021).

I am incredibly disappointed at how craft breweries are being treated in this situation. This does appear completely at odds with the Queensland Craft Brewing Strategy. The strategy claims to make a priority of helping craft brewers get access to markets to grow the industry and create more local jobs. Just not seeing it in this case.

To quote the Bill:

“Having regard to concerns raised by stakeholders, amendments in the Bill provide for greater regulatory oversight and responsible service of alcohol practices. These include: Removal of beer and pre-mixed alcoholic drinks – given some beer and pre-mixed alcoholic drinks with spirits have a very high percentage of alcohol by volume, therefore posing a greater risk of adverse intoxication, these types of liquor will not be able to be sold for takeaway.”

It is difficult to understand the exclusion given there appears to be no data that provides evidence to back claims made about adverse intoxication. Does the government have any studies that illustrate there has been higher levels of alcohol-related harm resulting from restaurants being able to sell takeaway since the temporary Bill was introduced?

As a simple logic check, the average retail beer has an ABV of 4-6%, and RTDs are between 4 and 6%, while wine sits at 12-14%, a far higher percentage of alcohol by volume. While some beers may be of a higher percentage, these are not generally available for on-premise sale. Is there evidence that wine is shared while craft beer is not?

We also note that any person can purchase beer, spirits and wine of high ABV content at any time from bottle shops with no volume limit. To limit take-away sales only to bottle shops is a discriminatory decision that favours and protects certain elements of the industry, with no data to justify that decision.

In regard to the responsible service of alcohol, a patron has the choice at any time to either make a take-away purchase at the venue they are dining in or walking out the door into a major chain bottle shop to make a purchase. Simple geographical relocation of the consumer will not change their consumption intentions. Further, a dining establishment will be far more likely to implement RSA requirements over patrons dining at their premises. More so than an employee at a bottle shop will.

In terms of harm minimisation, we feel it would be far better for a patron to purchase a take-away at the premises they have been in and return directly home, rather than have the patron travel to a different location to buy take-away from a bottle shop before returning home.

It also appears that that the This bill is supporting a duopoly of sales being controlled by two major food retailers with support from a non-arms length QHA. Once again contrary to the directions and strategies announced in the Queensland Craft Beer Strategy.

It is the stupidity and lack of logic in liquor laws that appears to lead so many venues to breaching responsible service guidelines in order to be profitable. Let's try and get a solution that is responsible, minimises harm, positively impacts local communities and encourages small and regional business to employ locals and support other local industry. The decision is yours...

Adam Gibb
Owner
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