



Speech by

CAROLYN MALE

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Hansard 7 October 2003

LIQUOR AMENDMENT BILL

Ms MALE (Glass House—ALP) (3.57 p.m.): I rise in support of the bill because it is commonsense, balanced legislation. This legislation will improve professionalism within the liquor industry and service delivery for hotel patrons. Recent surveys in the hospitality industry, including hotels, have highlighted problems, and this is also true for the industry on the Sunshine Coast. Anything that improves management within this industry will be welcomed by the public. I believe the legislation will deliver on this particular aspect.

I am sure there are many MPs who have horror stories that have been passed on to them by their constituents about poor service at licensed premises. The issue of the responsibility of licensees who provide alcohol at licensed premises to patrons who are underage or who have already had too much to drink is one that many of my constituents have spoken to me about. When a licence application became available in Caboolture for a new hotel, one of the few issues to have galvanised the community was the problems people faced when drunken patrons leave hotels early in the morning and create havoc in residential streets, at railway stations, businesses and so on. Some of those problems stem back to the irresponsible serving of alcohol to patrons. Mandatory training can only be a good thing for our constituents.

Whether we are talking about our local watering hole, a boutique establishment servicing the tourist industry, or the hotel down the street, ensuring that our licensees and nominees are fully trained is vital. They will need to know all of the relevant laws and have training in risk management and harm minimisation. Certainly, the information they obtain will be passed on to the people who work for them to make sure that processes are in place throughout the organisation to ensure that the Liquor Act is upheld and that their responsibilities to themselves, their staff, their patrons and the wider community are upheld.

We all have very responsible licensed premises in our electorate. I attended the Glass House Country Business Awards on Saturday night and was pleased to see that both the Beerwah and the Landsborough hotels were prominently represented throughout and received a lot of good feedback from the people of the area.

The Beerwah RSL is a prime example of a fantastic licensed premises which supports the community through various sponsorship which provides a quality family place to attend but also is very much involved in the education and employment opportunities for young people in the area. It has always been supportive of the high school students in terms of dealing with the catering students as well as traineeships and apprenticeships. We have responsible hotels and liquor outlets. This legislation is not particularly aimed at them because they are already doing the good work. It is to ensure that everyone reaches the same standards that they are already setting.

As we talk about education prospects, I think we should also make a note of the fact that the Labor government has ensured there has been an education process for the patrons of clubs when we are talking about watching out for drink spiking. We have also been very much involved in preventing drink-driving and educating people about how much is a standard drink, how much should they be having to drink and also looking after their mates to ensure that they do not drive home. We have been applying those education standards throughout the community already. This is just another aspect of

that particular area to ensure that anyone who is out there enjoying the restaurant trade or the hotels can do so safely and can get home safely as well. This legislation, as I said, is aimed at ensuring that all licensees know their responsibilities. My constituents feel that this is certainly going to be good value for them as well.

The legislation is also balanced because it allows a window of 12 months for licensees to complete the training course. As a government we realise that we have many remote and rural areas in which people can have more difficulty in accessing particular courses that they need to undertake so that they can comply with this particular legislation. So we have allowed that 12-month window of opportunity. I think that will give everyone the opportunity to access the course. The member for Pumicestone certainly covered all those aspects in her speech earlier this afternoon.

When I was reading through the explanatory notes, I was pleased to see the high level of consultation with relevant stakeholders and to see that their viewpoints were very well considered. We have certainly received their support for the amendments that we are debating today. This legislation will improve the standards within the liquor and hospitality industries and deserves the full support of the House. I commend the bill to the House.