



Speech by

Hon. Peter Lawlor

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

Hansard Tuesday, 4 August 2009

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Alcohol Related Violence

Hon. PJ LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (10.17 am): The prevalence of glassing incidents in our society is of great concern to the Bligh government. In the past 12 months, 47 glassing attacks have been reported in Queensland, with an alarming 36 occurring on the Gold Coast alone. The Bligh government takes this matter very seriously, and incidents of this type are totally unacceptable. That is why the state government is cracking down on the use of glass in high-risk problem venues across the state in a bid to improve public safety and reduce alcohol fuelled violence.

The Premier announced recently that the government will additionally establish a far-reaching state-wide parliamentary inquiry into alcohol related violence and its ramifications as part of a determined effort to improve public safety throughout the state. This inquiry will not only examine the role of licensees and publicans in introducing measures to reduce alcohol related violence; it will also examine the role of parents in educating children to the dangers of alcohol.

The Bligh government is working with the liquor industry and the Queensland Police Service to identify high-risk venues and aims to replace glass with plastic or similar cups by the end of the year. Enough is enough. We have to stop glass being used as a weapon. Of the 45 recorded incidences of glassings in licensed premises in Queensland alone since July last year, 64 per cent have occurred in hotels with a further 17 per cent occurring in nightclubs. While well over half of these matters occurred after midnight, surprisingly 15 per cent occurred before 8 pm. Glassing attacks have become part of a frightening culture. What young people are doing to themselves and each other these days is quite scary.

Patron safety is of utmost importance, and the government will not apologise for taking a tough stance on this issue. The Bligh government is meeting its commitments to keep the community safe and reduce alcohol related violence. Too many of our young people are becoming victims of the misuse and abuse of alcohol. It is the responsibility of a good government to protect them from harm while working to change this dangerous alcohol culture.