



Speech By
Robbie Katter

MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA

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LIQUOR (RED TAPE REDUCTION) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (4.38 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Liquor (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. I was happy to serve the committee overseeing this bill. Generally I agree with the ethos or the intent of the bill, which is to reduce red tape. I sympathise with all small businesses, which face so many challenges. It seems in the past few years that a wave of regulatory burden has built up and the momentum has gone in only one direction. It is always pleasing to see these sorts of things rolled back. I am very supportive of that.

There are a number of ways that this bill attempts to reduce the regulatory burden. I am supportive of all those measures. There are some in particular that I would like to focus on. Without harping on too much with what has already been said, the bill provides a provision for holders of liquor licences to enter into payment plans in times of hardship. The government suggests that this will lift the financial burden on struggling businesses. I think that is an excellent initiative and takes into account economic conditions at the moment.

There is one area of the bill that I would like to focus on and where I think it could go a bit further. There has been a lot of cause for concern in my electorate about the small pubs in remote areas which are the pillars of the community. They fulfil a social function for the community. Quite often they are not very good businesses commercially. Most of the owners are running these pubs out of love rather than to earn an income.

One owner wrote to me about this the other day. I know that the pub is central to the community. Particularly given the climate in the cattle grazing industry at the moment, it is a big thing for people to have somewhere social to go to discuss their problems or talk to other people. The turnover for this pub was about \$150,000 to \$200,000 last year. Usually the net profit for smaller pubs is 10 or 20 per cent of turnover. That meant that that owner was earning \$30,000 net profit for that year. That is before he takes a wage. He is paying himself out of that \$30,000 a year. It shows how close to the wind these people are sailing. We can stand by and watch them all fall over, but this is one way that will really help them.

During consideration in detail, I will seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill. I table the amendment and the notes to the amendment. The amendment seeks to take this provision a bit further. It provides a sliding scale in terms of licence fees for smaller pubs.

Tabled paper: Liquor (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013, to be moved during consideration in detail by the member for Mount Isa, Mr Rob Katter MP [\[4096\]](#).

Tabled paper: Liquor (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013, to be moved during consideration in detail by the member for Mount Isa, Mr Rob Katter MP, explanatory notes [\[4097\]](#).

Restrictions have been eased for restaurants and cafes operating under a subsidiary on-premises licence, for small community club licences, for community other club licences and for restricted liquor permit holders. I think that is a good thing for rural and remote areas. I am a big fan of

that provision. When I was campaigning for election someone said to me, 'Can you do something about the red tape. We try to have community events and we labour through the red tape and getting RSAs. That has closed some events down in smaller areas.' I give credit where credit is due. I compliment the minister for bringing that provision in.

Another issue for people was the burden of having a person trained in RSA on staff. This issue was brought up by a licensee of one of the major establishments in Mount Isa. This person said that it is very difficult to comply with and it in no way compromises safety or the management expertise that they have on staff. He said it was very difficult for them to comply with the existing act and attract staff to Mount Isa. He said that the changes proposed in the bill are excellent. He is very supportive of the provisions.

All in all, this is a very good bill for my area. I flag that it could go a bit further in terms of the liquor licensing fees and payments. Other than that, I am fully supportive of the bill.