




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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**TACKLING ALCOHOL-FUELLED VIOLENCE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL;
LIQUOR AND FAIR TRADING LEGISLATION (RED TAPE REDUCTION)
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (12.51 am): I will start where the health minister left off, and that is in relation to the Sunshine Coast. In this debate when the health minister talks about the great lockouts that we have, his support for this legislation and for the denial of the rights of individuals to go out and have a safe night out, he uses the Sunshine Coast as an example. As a member for the Sunshine Coast, let me tell you that we have had lockouts for many years on the Sunshine Coast. Did the lockout prevent the death of Josh Mill? No. Did the lockout prevent the death of Bruce Steensen? No. We had lockouts on the Sunshine Coast and we have had deaths and we have had violence, so much so that families of the victims of the violence have come out and said that lockouts would not have prevented certain deaths on the streets on the Sunshine Coast. So the health minister cannot come in here and say that this will solve the issue. The Sunshine Coast has been dealt the devil's hand with respect to alcohol fuelled violence. The lockouts that were implemented did not work. It would have been great if they had; but they did not.

An honourable member: Then why do we still have them?

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. Why do we still have them on the Sunshine Coast? Well, this is my point. The Sunshine Coast is different to the Valley. The Valley is different from Cairns.

A government member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I will get there. Cairns is different from the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast is different from Townsville. The Sunshine Coast does not have 5 am trading; the Sunshine Coast does not have 3 am trading. At best you can go out on the Sunshine Coast and have a two o'clock night. Most pubs and clubs shut at two o'clock in the morning. That is why when they have a lockout on the Sunshine Coast it is a completely different situation. That is why a one-size-fits-all approach will not work in Queensland.

Mrs D'Ath interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the Attorney-General. She says, 'It's going to work.' It is not, because at the start of this debate before the Attorney-General introduced this legislation it was going to be a lockout across the state. Then before the legislation was introduced it was changed to a lockout in the safe night precincts. Then today we have a deal done with the Katter party. 'Well, it's going to be a lockout, but it's not going to apply for another year.' They are concerned about deaths and violence in Queensland, yet they can afford to delay it a year.

Mr Costigan: Work that out!

Mr BLEIJIE: I cannot work it out, member for Whitsunday. If they are so concerned about deaths and violence in Queensland, why delay it a year? If they are putting their whole political career—as the

Premier has said—on this very issue, how can they delay it for a year? Because of the deal they have done with the Katter party.

The Safe Night Out Strategy was the most comprehensive strategy in Australia to tackle alcohol fuelled violence. And when we say alcohol fuelled violence we mean alcohol and drug fuelled violence, because we acknowledge the issue that drugs play in our communities, not just alcohol. We had the most comprehensive strategy in Australia, and the LNP government wanted to change the drinking culture in the community. We wanted to change the behaviour. We wanted to make it a safe environment for people to go out, and we wanted to set up local boards where the locals controlled the issue and what happened in their areas. Because, as I said at the beginning, what happens on the Sunshine Coast is different to the Valley and so forth.

In the last couple of weeks I went to Cairns with the member for Mount Ommaney, and we spoke to business operators there who were opposed to these lockouts and they said that they will have to sack Queenslanders because of this legislation. So you have the government in here this morning talking about jobs, you have the Attorney-General in here this morning talking about traineeships and jobs, and yet she is introducing and passing legislation tonight that will sack Queenslanders from jobs. I remember a young lady that I spoke to at Cairns in one of the clubs. She was one of the bouncers there and she said that if this legislation passes this parliament, her hours will be reduced by about 16 hours a week and she does not know how she will be able to afford to live so she will probably have to leave the industry. These are jobs that we are talking about.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I hear the groans from the member for Brisbane Central. I was hoping to get to the member for Brisbane Central—believe it or not, the employment minister—a little later in my contribution. The member for Brisbane Central represents the biggest entertainment precinct in Queensland. If I had an hour it would still not give me enough time to table and talk about the correspondence online today against the member for Brisbane's stance on this issue. The member for Brisbane Central, the employment minister of the state, is going to cast her vote tonight for a job-destroying bill in her own electorate. Thousands and thousands of people rely on the entertainment industry in her electorate, and tonight she is putting them out of a job. When we were in Cairns talking to locals, the Attorney-General all of a sudden jetted up the next day.

Mrs D'Ath: Trust me, it was not because of you!

Mr BLEIJIE: I am sure it was all planned in your calendar to arrive the day after I was there. They realised they had a political problem, so the Attorney-General jetsetted up there and she brought all the Brisbane blow-ins with her. I talked with locals. I met locals on the ground and spoke about the impacts to businesses in Cairns, just as the shadow Attorney-General met the business folk of Townsville. The shadow Attorney-General and I did not have to bring in blow-ins other than us two, of course. We did not have to bring a cargo of people from Brisbane to convince North Queensland how good or bad these laws are. We spoke to the people in Cairns—

Mr Costigan: Real people.

Mr BLEIJIE:—real businesspeople and people who are employed. I did not have to bring in Clubs Queensland; I did not have to bring in anyone to explain the issues. The Attorney-General talked about consultation. One of the differences between the government's response and our response to alcohol fuelled violence is that we consulted over a two-year period with the Queensland community to come up with the most comprehensive strategy dealing with alcohol fuelled violence.

An accusation was made at the time about donations to the Liberal National Party from the liquor industry. Our policy was more restrictive to the liquor industry than the Labor Party's policy. We mandated ID scanners to be effective from July last year, but those opposite canned it. That would have been a cost to the liquor industry, but the Attorney-General canned it. Now there are no mandated ID scanners. This would have been a cost to the liquor industry, but the Attorney-General torpedoed it.

We also said that education about alcohol and drug related violence was to be provided in schools. Every year from year 7 there was to be mandated education in our schools about alcohol and drug related violence. Those opposite and the Attorney-General have sat on their hands for a year. Did they implement that education in our schools for the last 12 months? No. But I note that the Premier came out a week ago and said, 'We have come up with a great policy. We are going to implement education in our schools.' They should have done it a year ago. The fact is that the Attorney-General, the education minister, the police minister and the Premier have sat on their hands and have not tackled this issue for 12 months.

We had tougher penalties, because we believe that you should not target the majority for the sins of a few. Most Queenslanders want to go out and have a great night out and a safe night out. We should

not target the majority of good citizens to pay for the sins of a few. We ought to target the sins of a few and have tougher penalties, which we implemented.

I note that there are now many Queenslanders subject to the charge of unlawful striking causing death which the LNP introduced, not the Labor Party. The Labor Party have tried to claim the high moral ground in relation to the protection of Queensland citizens in our entertainment precincts. They cannot have that. No political party can take that high moral ground because all of us in this place want to make sure we have the best legislation going forward to target the issue of alcohol fuelled violence and to make sure Queenslanders are safe.

The issue we on this side of the House have is that lockouts are not the silver bullet the Attorney-General and the Premier claim them to be. You need a collaborative approach. You need to talk to the not-for-profit sector in the area. You need to talk to the chaplains that are operating in Brisbane and other areas right around Queensland. I met with the former CEO of the chaplains in Cairns. They were opposed to the Attorney-General's lockout laws. They will not be a silver bullet.

I have no doubt that this legislation will pass tonight and that, unfortunately, a Queenslanders will still die because of alcohol fuelled violence and because of this legislation. This will not solve the issue. If the government were serious they would have a collaborative approach, they would get tougher on the criminals responsible, they would talk to the local community, particularly the liquor boards, and they would come up with local community solutions to tackle the issues in local areas.

(Time expired)