




Speech By
Hon. Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

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REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 2); AND APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2)

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (4.00 pm): Today I rise to make a very brief contribution in support of the cognate bills, but I want to focus particularly on the issue of turbo yeast. In my capacity as ministerial champion I look after the community of Mornington Island and it has been great to hear the statements in the House today from members of the committee who travelled to Mornington Island as well as other members in the House. I have been to Mornington Island a number of times now in my role as ministerial champion and it does not matter who you speak to on the island—whether it is the elders, the council, the mayor, the councillors, the CEO, people from the hospital or even staff at the school—the No. 1 issue that every single person on that island raises is alcohol. For an island that has been a dry community for a number of generations now, I was alarmed going out at night with the Mornington Island police and seeing the number of extremely intoxicated people who were wandering the streets in an area where you supposedly cannot buy alcohol, and it was because of the home-brew.

I heard anecdotal reports that the store on Mornington Island goes through one tonne of sugar every fortnight, and this is in a community with about 1,000 people. I went to the store to have a look, and found the largest amount of sugar I have ever seen in any supermarket in Australia. It is fairly clear that a lot of that is potentially going into homemade alcohol using turbo yeast. One of the initiatives that the police had tried was they wrote to every single home-brew outlet in the country and asked them to not send postage packets of turbo yeast to Mornington. They received a pretty positive response from that, with a number of home-brew places being completely unaware that by servicing an online order they were contributing to a significant health issue many thousands of kilometres away.

No matter who you speak to up there, there is a very strong vibe about wanting to do something about turbo yeast. I heard some commentary earlier that there may be some issues around trying to police it and enforce it. I accept that, but we have to give those communities a go and we have to do what we can as a government to assist them with what they need. I know that on Mornington Island a ban on turbo yeast is certainly a step in the right direction. It is a strong community with a good vision forward. It now has a couple of generations of locals who have never had the opportunity or never really known what consumption of alcohol in what we could consider a normal environment is like. One of the goals is to try and normalise the community, if that makes any sense, from an alcohol perspective and I certainly support it in its endeavours. I very much support the ban on turbo yeast and the other parts of that legislation. Again, I want to thank the committee for taking the time to travel to Mornington because I know it means a lot to the locals.