




Speech By
Corrine McMillan

MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

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LIQUOR (RURAL HOTELS CONCESSION) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (6.09 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Liquor (Rural Hotels Concession) Amendment Bill currently before the House. The purpose of this bill is to introduce a concessional licence fee for commercial hotel licences in very remote Queensland. Underscoring this intention is the recognition that these hotels are the heart and soul of these communities and that they provide vital services and social support to their communities.

The bill proposes a 90 per cent reduction on all of a licensee's annual licence fees, including base fees and risk criterion fees for extended trading hours and poor compliance history. This will be integrated into the existing regulatory framework. I commend the intent of this private member's bill; however, I take issue with the application of the reduction to risk criterion fees and detached bottle shops. Regardless of location, it is sensible that risk criterion fees remain as they are, to be paid in full, to ensure not only that licensees effectively address all risks in their venues but also that demands on the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation are effectively compensated for through an effective regulatory framework. As such, I fully support the amendments being proposed by the Attorney-General that the concession will only apply to the base fee for relevant licences in very remote areas.

In considering this bill the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee gave consideration to many submissions—I thank those people who made submissions—relating to the application of the concession to licence fees for community clubs in very remote Queensland. The committee report outlined that the inclusion was not initially recommended due to the relatively minor change in fees when compared to hotel concession fees. I would suggest that, regardless of it being a minor amount, any assistance in these communities would be welcome.

We have seen very recently the extreme challenges that Queenslanders face as a consequence of drought and now flood. That applies generally to Queensland, significantly to remote Queensland but especially to very remote Queensland. Last week it was difficult for me to comprehend the scale of the flood event in North-West Queensland as I considered images of barges travelling down the main street of Normanton. I table those images.

Tabled paper: Photograph, undated, depicting barge [252](#).

Tabled paper: Photograph, undated, depicting State Emergency Service boat [253](#).

To my knowledge, these barges were the only way a community could get supplies. Even more difficult to comprehend were the reports of the scale of the loss suffered by farmers. The Carpentaria shire mayor suggested recently that up to 75 per cent of the region's cattle had died. Farmers in the region require support, and it is the community that will respond. It is in considering the extreme plight suffered not only now, during this time of natural disaster, but at all times that I wholeheartedly support the amendments being proposed by the Attorney-General to include in this concessional scheme the 42 small community clubs—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Member for Mansfield, I remind you, as in the point of order raised earlier, to please make sure you do not anticipate the introduction of amendments.

Ms McMILLAN: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker—in very remote Queensland of less than 2,000 members. The amendments recognise the fundamental role that small community clubs play in those communities—a very similar role that is just as vital as that of the hotels. What is more, these clubs largely facilitate the survival of sports and sporting facilities in those very remote towns.

Whether it is the Purple Pub in Normanton or the Normanton Bowls Club, pubs and clubs alike will be at the forefront of the recovery for these communities. Every dollar counts, and we as legislators should do all we can to ensure these clubs and pubs can continue to deliver for their towns—our Queensland towns. I commend this bill and the proposed amendments to the House.