




Speech By
David Crisafulli

MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

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LIQUOR (RURAL HOTELS CONCESSION) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (6.32 pm): I also support the bill, because it relates to an issue of fairness. These institutions are not just a place where people go to have a drink; in many cases they were the first structures built in a town during the gold rush. They act as a post office, a general store, a community meeting hall, and sometimes as a bush counsellor—a place where people go when they are doing it tough. Heaven knows that, at the moment, people in these rural areas are doing it tough. That is why we should all support this bill. That is why we should also support the amendments proposed by the member for Toowoomba South.

The amount of \$3,757 might not seem a big deal for an operator of a hotel in Brisbane, but it is for a hotel operator in Boulia. When I was growing up I watched my father go to a community club where, after working all day on his farm, he would work pouring beers. I saw the value of this club. It was a place where grown men could go and be listened to, a place where a woman could go with her children and play a game of bocce. It was a great community pub and was the heart of my home town of Ingham. When I travel across Queensland I always find time to go to a regional hotel, whether it is the Nindigully Hotel—the oldest in the state—the White Horse Tavern in Charters Towers, the first tavern in Queensland, or Lees Hotel in my home town of Ingham, which is the original pub with no beer.

I want to conclude by recalling a conversation I had with my best friend on the weekend. I was telling the story of my trips throughout Queensland when I was the local government minister. I ran late for a meeting with only one council, the Quilpie council, because I got stuck at the Toompine Hotel. I met a great Australian by the name of Jonesy. During the course of my time at the Toompine Hotel—where I, in fact, left my jacket behind—Jonesy told me everything about the local area. There are Jonesies right across Queensland.

The member for Traeger made an excellent point about outback hotels. Without outback hotels and pubs, the face for tourism is not there. Without outback hotels, rural towns cannot put on a brave tourism face. Those outback hotels are the places where tourists will congregate at night-time, where they will go for their entertainment, where they will go to meet the true locals.

I support this bill wholeheartedly. I would love to see the provisions of this bill expanded to help communities in their hour of need. I look forward to all 93 members of this House supporting the heart and soul of rural communities.