




Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR HILL

Record of Proceedings, 26 February 2019

LIQUOR (RURAL HOTELS CONCESSION) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (5.45 pm): I acknowledge and support the Liquor (Rural Hotels Concession) Amendment Bill introduced by the member for Traeger. I acknowledge his work. I appreciate and thank the government for their support of this bill and also the opposition. The explanatory notes probably explain almost everything. They state—

Remote communities contain a relatively smaller pool of potential patrons and income for venues in these areas can be highly impacted by external factors and seasonality. Therefore, profitability is extremely low even with the highest level of commercial prudence.

This Bill recognises the need to reduce unnecessary non-operational costs for venues in small remote communities to support their viability and the service they offer to the community.

The explanatory notes state—

The *Liquor (Rural Hotels Concession) Amendment Bill 2018* acknowledges the need for a less prescriptive approach to licencing fees. Currently all liquor licence holders pay the same fee regardless of their location, size, services, revenue or profitability.

As I said, it is good that the government is supporting this bill. We have seen in rural and regional Queensland the closure of railway stations, courthouses and pubs, which are the social fabric of those communities. Pubs are a place where people enjoy social interaction. They are a meeting place. People can play games there. They can have functions. When those pubs are gone then that is it. That is the end of the community.

When I was first elected, I had the opportunity to represent some areas that are now covered in the electorates of the member for Gregory and the member for Traeger. There was nothing much in those communities other than the pub. You would send them a flier to let them know that you were meeting people in those towns and the pub was the only place where you would meet. I will mention a few places: Forsayth, Muttaborra, Jericho, Aramac and Torrens Creek hotels. They are just a few examples. The interesting thing is that some of them are on as low as \$16,000 gross a year, yet they are still paying around \$3,700 in pub licence fees compared to some pubs that are on \$30 million gross a year and are paying exactly the same in fees.

The member for Traeger mentioned Alan Start. The township of Einasleigh was part of my electorate. There is only a pub in the township. That is it—nothing else. To that community the pub is everything. That was another place that I used to visit. I acknowledge and thank Alan Start. He used to say to us that he does not do this for money; he just wants to keep his community alive and keep that social interaction. He loves his job. At the same time he cannot keep going like that year in year out because when it comes to income he cannot get away. I met him on the Tablelands. He says that he does not even have money to travel. His life is the pub and that is it. It is great to see such a wonderful patriot continuing to support pubs. This is like all the small rural pubs in Queensland. Yes, we admire what the big pubs and hotels do, but we also have to look after the small pubs. They are the social fabric of their communities. I would like to table what Alan asked me to bring to the attention of the House because it is so important. He has made a difference. He is going to improve the quality of life of small pubs and communities across Queensland.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 4 July 2013, from Einasleigh Hotel (Mr Alan Start) to Mr Katter regarding licence fee summary [251](#).