




Speech By
Daniel Purdie

MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

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LIQUOR (ARTISAN LIQUOR) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (12.38 pm): I rise to speak on the Liquor (Artisan Liquor) Amendment Bill 2020 which, among other reforms to the Liquor Act 1992, provides for a tailored liquor licence for craft brewers and artisan distillers, making it easier for them to showcase and sell their products at public events. On behalf of Queensland's burgeoning artisan liquor industry, I welcome this bill and the benefits it will bring to the hundreds of 'beerpreneurs', their families and their local communities as they seek to recover from the pandemic's economic tsunami and grow their markets on a more level playing field.

I acknowledge the contribution made by our shadow minister, the member for Clayfield, and also the deputy chair of the committee, the member for Currumbin, who outlined and highlighted a number of concerns in relation to the bill. On balance, the purpose of the bill is to strengthen the artisan liquor industry by supporting the growth and sustainability of craft breweries and artisan distilleries, while maintaining appropriate regulatory controls and oversight.

This bill gives effect to the government's development of the 2018 Queensland Craft Brewing Strategy and the entrepreneurial pipeline project report, which identified the need to simplify the liquor licensing process and create market access opportunities for artisan liquor producers. Consultation with industry and stakeholders took place as part of these initiatives, and on 2 March 2020 a general agreement about new licence authorisations was reached at a roundtable meeting attended by representatives from the Queensland Hotels Association, the Australian Distillers Association, Clubs Queensland, the Independent Brewers Association and government agencies.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the members of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for their consideration of this bill and the enormous amount of work invested by industry stakeholders. I particularly want to thank the committee for its careful assessment of the bill's harm minimisation regulations and its consistency with tackling alcohol fuelled violence.

As you know, our police do not need more work, but small businesses must be given fair access to their markets. This can be a difficult balancing act when alcohol is involved. Independent craft brewing is a vibrant and dynamic sector with significant potential to expand locally, nationally and internationally. There are 750 craft brewers in Australia, upward of 110 in Queensland, and close to 20 in the Sunshine Coast region. Before the pandemic disrupted the industry Queensland craft brewers and artisan distillers employed over 1,800 people and injected in excess of \$62 million annually into the economy. This figure is projected to grow to \$100 million by 2024. In April 2020 the Independent Brewers Association reported that nationwide sales at craft breweries were down 67 per cent because of COVID related business restrictions and closures.

Legislative change will breathe some life back into the industry by: creating a new liquor licence category for legitimate craft brewers and artisanal distillers; expanding the existing promotional event permit framework; providing additional authorisations for eligible producers and wholesale licensees; and encouraging the transition of existing licensees to the new artisan producer licence category. Artisan producer licensees will be able to: sell their own liquor products and other Queensland artisan

liquor products for consumption on the premises; sell their own liquor products for consumption off the premises; sell their own liquor products wholesale; sell their own liquor products online; apply for a licence condition to sell samples and takeaways of their liquor products at promotional events subject to volume limits; and apply for a commercial public event permit. As stated in the explanatory notes—

The proposed new artisan producer licence:

- provides for the subcategories of 'beer' and 'spirits' for applicants/licensees whose principal activity is the production and sale of craft beer and/or artisan spirits on the licensed premises;
- restricts the granting, and continued holding, of the licence to legitimate craft brewers and/or artisanal distillers with:
 - annual production volumes of between 2,500-5,000,000 litres (L) of craft beer or 400-450,000L of artisanal spirits;
 - at least 70 per cent of total annual liquor sales comprised from craft beer or artisan spirits produced on the licensed premises;
 - less than 20 per cent ownership by a large brewer (annual production volume exceeding 40,000,000L of beer) or large distiller (annual production volume exceeding 2,000,000L of spirits); and
 - an appropriate licence type within the meaning of the Excise Act 1901 (Cwlth);
- authorises the sale of the licensee's own liquor products, and 'other' Queensland artisan liquor products (including Queensland wine), for on-premises consumption under ordinary trading hours of 10am to 12 midnight;
- limits late-night extended trading hours to 1am to avoid premises operating as bars/nightclubs (other licence categories can apply for extended trading hours until 2am, or 3am if located in a safe night precinct);
- authorises the sale of the licensee's own liquor products for off-premises consumption under ordinary trading hours for takeaway of 10am to 10pm;
- enables licensees to apply for extended trading hours for early morning trading (9am to 10am) for on and off-premises consumption;
- allows orders for the licensee's own products to be taken online;
- authorises the sale of the licensee's own product wholesale;

The Independent Brewers Association specifically requested the removal of clause 30 of the bill to reduce red tape. However, the DJAG data requirement ensures that licence breaches will be more easily identified, as the licence is only available to brewers who produce no more than five million litres of beer annually and distillers who produce no more than 450,000 litres each year. This is believed to be the best way for the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation to ensure only legitimate artisan producers have access to the licence. In this way the requirement also prevents large alcohol companies manipulating the system through the ownership of multiple breweries. The Australian Distillers Association supported the new bill and said—

These reforms will encourage new entrants to the Queensland distilled spirits industry, and make it easier for current producers to employ more Queenslanders and boost further investments for future growth.

The Independent Brewers Association raised several concerns pertaining to the restriction of: off-premises consumption and takeaway provisions; contract or multisite brewing restrictions which give rise to a brewery not being able to sell the beer produced at one site at the taproom of another site by the same company; and the restricted definition of promotional events, referring once again to the wine industry regulation as a model.

In relation to harm minimisation, licence holders are required to submit a community impact statement and a risk assessment management plan as part of their licence obligations. The bill also provides for increased power for the commissioner to impose conditions on a licence or permit; specifically, to limit or specify the sample size and total volume that can be sold at promotional events. This is intended to provide safeguards to limit the amount of liquor supplied and is another provision for harm minimisation within the bill.

I wish to give a shout-out to some of the hard working and popular breweries in my electorate of Ninderry. The Sunshine Coast Brewery, located in Kunda Park, was established in 1998 and happens to be one of the first on the Sunshine Coast scene. In fact, it is one of the oldest running microbreweries in Queensland and is not to be confused with the Sunshine Brewery in Kuluin. There is also a brewery in North Arm, Terella Brewing, that is just as boutique as the town itself. As I reflect on the comments made by the Australian Distillers Association to the committee, I feel they apply to the local breweries in my region too. The ADA said—

We all have a story behind the spirits we are making, be it a story from our region, family or the past.

The artisan community is special and works hard to protect and grow our regions. Whilst we must be careful with liquor licensing, we must also support the emergence of a 'non-binge' culture that elevates our sense of belonging to local produce and ingredients in what we eat and drink and an alternative that transcends the conglomerate liquor market in the same way wineries did decades ago. Testament to this is the visit-and-taste food-to-plate culture that we on the Sunshine Coast know only too well. I support the bill.