




Speech By
Lance McCallum

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

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LIQUOR (ARTISAN LIQUOR) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (3.55 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill. Today we raise a glass to Queensland craft brewers and say 'cheers' to our artisan distillers. The introduction of this bill is part of the Palaszczuk government's ongoing support of this booming and innovative industry, supporting the jobs and economic growth that go with it. It delivers on a commitment under the Craft Brewing Strategy to establish a new licence that better suits the industry by directly providing the authorisations desired by craft brewers. Under the new licence, our artisan producers will be able to operate taprooms and tasting rooms without a second licence, while also increasing their ability to sell takeaway liquor and to boost general retail sales.

The hospitality industry has been one of the hardest hit during the COVID pandemic, and that impact has been felt by the more than 100 craft brewers and distillers across the Sunshine State. We are supporting them as part of our commitment to promote Queensland-made artisan products and increase opportunities to innovate, expand and employ.

The bill will amend the Liquor Act by creating a new liquor licence category for legitimate craft brewers and artisan distillers; expanding the existing promotional event permit framework; providing additional authorisations for eligible producer/wholesaler licensees; and encouraging the transition of existing licensees to the new artisan producer licence category.

The bill was widely consulted on and has received significant support, not least from the Australian Distillers Association. The Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol made submissions around important issues including minimising the risk of large alcohol companies owning multiple craft breweries under this framework. The bill ensures the artisan producer licence can be accessed only by genuine independent craft brewers and artisan distillers via yearly minimum and maximum production volumes. Licensees will also be required to submit an annual return under section 203 of the Liquor Act.

Regarding sample sizes, the bill introduces a head of power to prescribe sample sizes by regulation. A size limit of 150 millilitres of craft beer and 15 millilitres of artisan spirits will be prescribed in the liquor regulations to commence with the bill. The bill strengthens our artisan liquor by supporting growth and sustainability of our craft breweries and artisan distilleries whilst maintaining regulation and oversight in line with community expectations.

The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's final report unanimously recommended that the bill be passed. It is about strengthening the industry for the future and continuing to work our way back from the pandemic. Prior to COVID, our burgeoning craft beer industry employed more than 1,700 people, pouring an estimated \$62 million into the Queensland economy each and every year. That figure is expected to increase to well over \$100 million by 2024, energising economies across the state.

Almost 25 per cent of our craft breweries are based in regional towns. While tourism and foot traffic continues to return to these centres, craft connoisseurs are backing their brews with online orders and other initiatives to help ensure the longevity of their favourite frothy, from 4 Pines in Coolangatta to Hemingway's at Port Douglas.

Like the craft beer scene, our artisan distilling industry also continues to expand, with more than 30 independents across Queensland. About 40 per cent of our distillers are in the regions and they now have the potential to create more jobs in manufacturing and front of house. More jobs means more support for our local regional economies and more opportunities for our distillers to sell their products—a clear win for all involved.

This bill is the latest shout in the Palaszczuk government's commitment to craft brewing. Last year we launched Australia's first ever BrewLab, a \$1.1 million facility at the Coopers Plains Health and Food Sciences precinct, that allows craft brewers to test their products and develop new recipes without interrupting their own production lines. The state-of-the-art facilities include a sensory lab and quality assurance services where brewers get their beers tasted and tested for elements such as acidity and alcohol volume. They can also get brewery staff trained in the precise identification and tasting of aromas, flavours and tastes.

To further futureproof the industry, BrewLab is home to Queensland's first TAFE course in brewing. The Certificate III in Food Processing (Brewing) is a collaboration between TAFE and BrewLab that takes hands-on training in production, fermentation, filtration and packaging. It means Queenslanders can access the training they need to fill highly skilled brewing jobs, ensuring our businesses continue to grow.

BrewLab has the tools on tap to produce the best possible beer, and that is what we have right across our state. Our top shelf beers are now being enjoyed around the world, bringing a taste of Queensland to a highly competitive market. Brisbane's Newstead Brewing Co. recently secured its first export order, with nine different brews touching down in Hong Kong on 15 February. The deal follows Newstead's attendance at the major food and beverage exhibition, Hofex 2019, as part of Trade & Investment Queensland's Taste of Queensland trade mission. Newstead now employs 45 people and the business continues to demonstrate resilience, innovation and determination while conditions and markets change through COVID. I am very pleased to hear that the brewery has major export plans for the next two to five years as it identifies more opportunities to take its tipples to the world.

It is not just Newstead products proving hot with beer lovers. The Great Annual Beer SpecTAPular Hottest 100 Craft Beers of 2020 saw five of the top 10 brews come from Queensland. Our Ipswich representative, Ballistic, enjoyed an outstanding result, placing sixth, 39th, 55th and 97th in the countdown. This national vote once again shows the strength and success of our craft brewing industry. Our latest artisan local is 4 Hearts Brewing in the heart of the Ipswich CBD where you can enjoy delicious preservative-free brews while relaxing at the Pumpyard or Dovetails Restaurant. It is an industry that we move further to support today, along with that of our artisan distillers. I commend the bill to the House.