




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR HILL

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LIQUOR (ARTISAN LIQUOR) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (3.42 pm): In speaking to the Liquor (Artisan Liquor) Amendment Bill 2020, I note the objectives of the bill are to support the growth and development of the Queensland craft and artisan liquor industry. This will be done by amending the Liquor Act 1992 by creating a new liquor licensing category. The new licence will allow craft brewers and artisan distillers to expand their capacity to sell their product online and at promotional events. The bill will finally bring this niche industry in Queensland into the 21st century and place them on a level playing field with other states.

Until this bill was introduced, the development of the craft and artisan liquor industry was stagnated as they struggled to compete with interstate rivals. This bill has been a long time coming, and the opposition could talk for hours about how it should have been introduced earlier. However, both sides of government had ample opportunity to introduce legislation over the past decade or more and failed to do so until now. I would rather congratulate the government on introducing this very worthwhile piece of legislation and I look forward to the development of the industry.

I like a cold beer and the odd spirit. Like any proud Queenslanders, after a game of footy I love the XXXX Gold. However, craft and artisan liquor offers an alternative for many Queenslanders to the mainstream brands. A lot of the time legislation looks after the big boys and the major corporations. Today we are looking after the little guys and giving them a fair go.

There are three distilleries in my electorate: Wild River Mountain; the Mount Uncle Distillery, which is right on the border; and the Bingil Bay Distillery, which I visited last year. I was so impressed by the massive amount of work that they put into starting their business. However, the growth in their business was stunted by restrictive liquor licensing. Since then I have been working closely with Paul and Lynda Williams from Bingil Bay Distillery in supporting them and the Australian Distillers Association to lobby the government for legislative change.

The creation of a new licence will now allow distillers to significantly grow their business through online sales. Because of COVID we saw a significant shift in the way we shop and buy our products with a massive increase in online sales during this period. The bill will allow distilleries in Queensland to capitalise on this change in buying patterns to significantly increase income for their businesses.

With an increase in sales comes an increase in job opportunities for rural and regional Queensland. I know Australian Distillers Association Queensland president David Ridden has been one of the driving forces behind getting this legislation over the line. I would like to read his statement from a recent media article on the bill which best sums up the impact this bill will have on the industry. The article states—

'It will allow ... small artisan producers across Queensland, to sell direct to the public with no restrictions and to be able to continue to sell online,' Mr Ridden said.

He went on to say—

Before COVID, we had about five people on staff and a couple of part-timers—today we have 10 people on staff ...

This is the effect this legislation will have on the industry in Queensland. I support the bill. I commend the bill to the House.