



Foundation for Alcohol
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Mr Duncan Pegg
Chair
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000
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Dear Mr Pegg

LIQUOR AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2017

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) welcomes the opportunity to provide input to the consultation on the *Liquor and Other Legislation (Amendment Bill) 2017* (the Bill). FARE supports the submission made by the Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA) and makes some additional comments below.

FARE reiterates QCAA's disappointment with the withdrawal of the lockout from the package of measures that were included in the *Tackling Alcohol-fuelled violence legislation*. The alcohol industry has been very vocal in its opposition to these measures and stirred up public debate on the issue. However, polling released in January of this year clearly shows that opponents to the measures are the vocal minority, with by far the majority of Queenslanders supporting the package of measures introduced by the Queensland Government in 2016.

Almost three quarters (72 per cent) of Queenslanders support the late night trading measures to reduce alcohol-related violence. When asked about the lockouts, the majority of Queenslanders (64 per cent) said that they believed the Queensland Government should honour its election commitment and introduce 1am lockouts for venues located within approved 3a.m. Safe Night Precincts.¹

The cancellation of the lockout provision is not based on any evidence provided within the interim evaluation report on the impact of the last drinks measures, released in January. This report says that:

“It is very important to note that there has been virtually no fidelity to the last-drinks at 3am in SNPs across Queensland due to the systematic and widespread use of extended trading permits;”.

It goes on to say that:

“Lack of notable change in trends since the introduction of the Policy also suggests the provision of extended trading permits (allowing the sale of alcohol until 5am) has compromised the impact of the Policy.”²

These statements support the action taken by the government to reduce the number of late night trading permits. QCAA’s submission supports this action and recommends that the changes to the permit system go further than the arrangements outlined in the Bill.

The conclusions drawn by the researchers do not relate to the introduction of lockouts and the decision to withdraw the lockouts, before they have been introduced, seems contrary to the demonstrated need to retain this measure and diminish the impact of industry activities. Lockouts were always seen as one of a number of measures introduced as part of the legislation which would support the primary objective of reducing the availability of alcohol through reduced trading hours.

FARE does not support the cancellation of the lockouts. This action was premature and encourages venues to think that if they continue with their campaign opposing the measures, the measures will be eroded over time. These measures need to be allowed to run their course and have the opportunity to take effect and be thoroughly evaluated.

There is strong evidence to support the effectiveness of these measures. The Parliament has seen the breadth of the national and international evidence developed in real world situations that show that these measures reduce alcohol harm. What the interim report does is demonstrate the complexity of the interactions that influence the success of strategies to reduce alcohol harm and the need to persevere with these measures.

FARE would be happy to meet with the Committee to discuss these issues further. Please contact Meredythe Crane on [REDACTED] in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

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MICHAEL THORN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

¹ Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (2017) *2017 Queensland Poll: Perspectives on alcohol-related violence and policies* January 2017 FARE: Canberra, available at <http://fare.org.au/2017/01/2017-queensland-poll-perspectives-on-alcohol/>

² Ferris J, Zahnow R, Miller P & Coomber K (2017) *Impact of the last drinks and lockouts* Report prepared for the Queensland Government, January 2017