



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

FLAWED ‘THREE STRIKES’ SCHEME FURTHER UNDERMINED BY HASTY GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL

21 May 2017: A government program designed to ensure licensed venues across New South Wales comply with liquor regulation was already failing to target the industry’s worst repeat offenders.

Now critics say a bill, introduced to Parliament by Racing Minister Paul Toole, threatens to further weaken the scheme and put the safety of patrons and local communities at increased risk.

The NSW ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAAPA), the state’s leading alcohol policy coalition is seeking to delay the Bill until such time as Parliament and public can consider all the information the Government has relied upon to support the amendments including community objections.

NAAPA’s previous submission into the review of the *Three strikes disciplinary scheme* highlighted serious loopholes and exemptions, and identified that the most violent and well connected pubs and nightclubs had not received any convictions and subsequent strikes since the beginning of the scheme in 2012.

NAAPA spokesperson and community advocate, Tony Brown says it is obvious that none of those concerns have been properly considered.

“It’s disappointing and frankly alarming that the Government’s response is to further dismantle a scheme that should serve to keep patrons and the community safe. Rather than addressing the abundantly clear short-comings, the proposed amendments appear to have been written by the NSW alcohol industry for the alcohol industry,” Mr Brown said.

Dr John Crozier, co-chair of the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA) Committee and Chair of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons Trauma Committee echoes that opinion, and believes it is becoming increasingly difficult for the community to have confidence in the effectiveness of liquor laws and their application in New South Wales.

“The Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority now boasts a one hundred per cent approval record for liquor licence applications, against the objections of Police, the Department of Health and the local community. The Government’s proposed changes to the Three Strikes scheme only serves to weaken the scheme and to further undermine the public’s confidence,” Dr Crozier said.

Dr Crozier and Mr Brown are available for interview.

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The NSW and ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAAPA) is an alliance of health and community organisations active across NSW and the ACT that has been formed with the objective of promoting action to reduce alcohol-related harms. The Coalition of NSW and ACT organisations has been formed to lobby and campaign for alcohol policy reform to reduce alcohol-related harms across the two jurisdictions.

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