# SA Government oversight – alcohol health impact absent from discussion

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With alcohol responsible for 12,500 hospitalisations in South Australia each year and 58 per cent of victim-reported crime in the Adelaide central business district alone, the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) says the prevention of alcohol harms should be the Government’s number one priority in undertaking its first full review of the *Liquor Licensing Act 1997*.

In its submission, FARE has made a total of 30 recommendations.

FARE Chief Executive Mr Michael Thorn says reform of liquor regulation must begin with elevating harm minimisation as the primary object of the Liquor Act.

“Frankly, it is concerning that the health impact of alcohol is completely missing from the Government’s Discussion Paper. The South Australian Government’s own *Alcohol and other drug strategy 2011* acknowledges the threat that alcohol poses and the Government has also adopted a world’s best practice to a ‘health in all policies’ approach to policy development; all of which makes its failure to acknowledge alcohol harms all the more curious,” Mr Thorn said.

In applying the health in all policies approach to this review, FARE is calling for the introduction of secondary supply laws. South Australia is currently the only jurisdiction in the country that does not have secondary supply legislation and is falling behind in its responsibility in protecting children from the harms associated with alcohol. The significant numbers of young people under 18 who are provided alcohol by an adult necessitate their introduction.

FARE also says the ban on the sale of alcohol in supermarkets must be maintained in South Australia.

Mr Thorn says the current debate over the sale of alcohol in supermarkets completely overlooks the serious and adverse impacts an increase in alcohol’s availability will have on crime and health.

“Up to now, any discussion on the sale of alcohol in supermarkets, in the media, has centred on the business implications of such a move. That’s a discussion that completely ignores the welfare of the people of South Australia. We know for a fact that an increase in outlet density will lead to greater harms. Furthermore, alcohol is a dangerous commodity and has no place alongside cornflakes and toilet paper. Increasing its availability in this fashion further normalises and entrenches a dangerous drinking culture, and risks further exposing children, and that’s the conversation we need to be having,” Mr Thorn said.

FARE has also called for the introduction of a 3am close and a 1am one-way-door policy to reduce violence in night time entertainment precincts, and for the introduction of alcohol sales data collection to better inform future public policy.

Mr Thorn says the review of the *Liquor Licensing Act* should be seen as an opportunity for South Australia to join with other jurisdictions in prioritising the reduction of alcohol harms.

“New South Wales has successfully introduced late-night trading measures that have led to a dramatic downturn in alcohol violence, and Queensland is soon to follow suit. By prioritising harm reduction there is no reason why the people of South Australia cannot enjoy the same reductions in alcohol harms and positive health and safety benefits, and cost-savings to the tax payer that will flow as a result.”

[view media release in pdf](https://www.fare.org.au/submission-in-response-to-the-liquor-licensing-discussion-paper-south-australia)

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### Metadata