

FARE CONDEMNS COMMITTEE'S PUSH TO DISMANTLE LIFE-SAVING ALCOHOL-VIOLENCE MEASURES

30 September 2019: The Committee's recommendations to roll back Sydney's late-night measures has been condemned as gravely irresponsible and a reckless capitulation to the alcohol industry.

Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) Chief Executive Michael Thorn says the Committee Report clearly glorifies profit ahead of the safety of Sydneysiders, and FARE is calling on Premier Berejiklian to consider the NSW Government's response very carefully.

"The evidence is iron-clad that increasing the availability of alcohol triggers more violence and harm. The Premier must understand that in the future every death from alcohol-fuelled violence in Sydney will be on her head," Mr Thorn said.

"Despite the evidence, the Committee has turned a blind eye to why these laws were enacted in the first place, and I urge the Premier to remember her promises to the parents whose sons and daughters have been injured or killed through alcohol-fuelled violence on the streets of Sydney," Mr Thorn said.

Mr Thorn says there is zero evidence to support any of the protections to health and safety put forward by the Committee.

"The irrefutable evidence of public health has been completely disregarded, and it is gobsmacking how the Committee has succumbed to the nonsense put forward by the alcohol industry and its sympathisers" Mr Thorn said.

Last month, the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) presented new research to the Parliamentary Inquiry showing nearly 2,500 non-domestic violence assaults were avoided across Kings Cross and Sydney's CBD over the five years of the last drinks measures.

BOCSAR also reported a rise in overall non-domestic assaults of between 18 and 30 per cent across the rest of Sydney over the same period.

Mr Thorn says these increasing rates of violence are a direct result of the Government's failure to extend the late night measures, which was repeatedly advocated by public health, medical and law enforcement bodies.

"It was predictable that over time and as the night-time economy adjusted to the changes in the CBD and Kings Cross that people's movement to other areas would see a rise in assaults. It was foreseeable and it should have been addressed," Mr Thorn said.

"It's outrageous that the Committee is now exacerbating this problem by recommending that licences could be transferred to outside the safe entertainment precincts," Mr Thorn said.



Mr Thorn has also condemned the Committee for being reckless by recommending removing late-night measures “with appropriate urgency”.

“Frankly, the Government would be aiding and abetting alcohol-harm by rushing to dismantle any life-saving measures ahead of the Christmas New Year period,” Mr Thorn said.

“Alcohol-related harm increases over the summer, and acting rashly would simply accommodate the alcohol industry and allow it to leverage its most lucrative season,” he said.

Mr Thorn is available for media interviews. Contact Clare Ross 0429 291120