



10 September 2008

ELMES SAYS LIQUOR REFORMS TARGET ELECTION, NOT COMMUNITY SAFETY

A reform of the *Liquor Act* 1992 was considered by Parliament this week through the *Liquor and Other Acts Amendment Bill* 2008 following a three-year process by the Labor Government.

The amending bill wants to change the focus of Liquor restrictions towards harm minimisation through a new tax on licensed venues and an advertising campaign directed towards alcohol consumers.

"The bill was hijacked by the Labor Party – instead of reforms being targeted at the safety of our community, it's all about a glossy feel-good advertising campaign aimed at making the Labor Government look good." Glen Elmes said.

"New fees on licensees will raise about \$28 million for the Government. According to their figures about half that will go on administration alone, which is yet another example of Labor Party economics.

"Of the balance, only \$1.1 million is set for ten new liquor licensing officers – none of whom will be joining the paltry three officer staff who are responsible for monitoring the entire Sunshine Coast region. The rest of the cash will go into a media blitz on TV and in pubs.

"The Government should be putting more money into operational staff at Liquor Licensing and Queensland Police. More Police officers are the solution to alcohol-fuelled problems at 3am, not a fuzzy TV campaign. My most recent information tells me that in the Noosa Police division there is only the officer in charge, plus 20 operational police available to staff a 24-hour police station and two Police Beats. Just think how many police we have to patrol nightclubs at 3 o'clock in the morning." Glen Elmes said.

"This coming week I intend to write to the pubs and nightclubs in my electorate who trade after midnight and request that they join into a voluntary accord to allow concerned local residents and businesses to meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of moving patrons away from their venue quickly and quietly at closing time and to make sure that any local residential areas are secure."

"I also call on the Government to allocate to the Liquor Licensing Division enough resources to do their job properly. In my opinion, licensed venues trading after midnight should have the conditions of their license reviewed every 12 months.
- **ENDS.**

A full text of Glen Elmes' speech is available at <http://www.glenelmes.com.au>

For interviews etc, please contact Glen Elmes on 3406 7340 or 0400 800 114.

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