




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR ALBERT

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LIQUOR AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (8.30 pm): I rise here tonight to speak on the Liquor and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. From the outset, I would like to thank the committee members for their deliberations on the bill and all the work which has gone in to it, especially the opposition members for their statement of reservation. I listened to the contribution from the member for Stafford, and I know that he is a man of conviction in that this is one of the issues he is very passionate about.

A few weeks ago I was down on the Gold Coast for my mother's birthday. She had a very nice birthday at George's, which is near the Broadbeach mall. I had my little kids with me and they are aged two, four and five. We left the restaurant at about 9.30 at night and headed back to the Oasis Shopping Centre car park, so we walked down the mall. We noticed a number of individuals getting dropped off who were already heavily intoxicated at 9.30 at night. As I was walking up the mall, I looked across at one of the nightclubs and saw two of the bouncers out the front actually tell a young lady that she could not enter because she was heavily intoxicated, and they were having an argument.

I say to the member for Stafford that the vast majority of these nightclubs are trying to do the right thing. They are trying to protect the other patrons in those nightclubs. They are businesspeople. They employ people. They employ workers. They require shop fit-outs which are done by my constituents. As I have said many times in this chamber, my electorate has an enormous number of tradies and some of them specialise in shop fit-outs. They are cabinet-makers.

When this matter first arose back in the previous LNP government, I remember taking a group of my constituents—including my community leaders, Neighbourhood Watch members and Crime Stoppers members—to Surfers Paradise so we could go there and talk to the police to see what was really going on. We were there on that night for quite a few hours, walking around with the police as they explained what they normally do. The vast majority of the people there were doing the right thing and they were behaving themselves. There were also individuals who were heavily intoxicated and needed a safe environment so they could recuperate and get home safely. That is why I was so supportive of the Safe Night Out Strategy. It was a common-sense approach which was developed in consultation with Queenslanders.

The strategy included: establishing 15 safe night precincts to ensure popular nightspots were kept safe for patrons; establishing the new offence of unlawful striking causing death, one punch can kill, with the maximum penalty of life; empowering police to issue banning orders to keep these violent individuals away from our safe night precincts; and coordinated action to ensure licensees provide a safe environment for their patrons. In the words of Our Nightlife Queensland—

Yes, without a doubt. The safe night strategy was a world-leading strategy, in our opinion, developed in partnership with all stakeholders. If that had been allowed to continue, we would be in a better place than we are in today. There is no doubt about that.

As the member for Chatsworth stated before, there were real results and these results were encouraging. We had an 18 per cent decrease in sexual assaults, a 10 per cent decrease in property damage and a 26 per cent increase in the detection of illegal drugs. It was making a real impact.

The member for Stafford spoke before about education. Yes, we need to educate people. We need to educate our young about the dangers of alcohol and drugs, but the problem is that they see it all the time on TV and on internet advertising and they are told, 'You shouldn't take drugs,' but they still take drugs. We tell people not to binge drink but they still binge drink. We need to get it through their heads that this is not the way to live.

When the price of alcohol was increased through the alcopops tax in 2008 under former prime minister Kevin Rudd, it did not make a single dent in alcohol injuries and admissions to hospital. I want to quote from an article on news.com.au from 17 May 2013 under the heading 'Alcopop tax fails to deter teen binge drinking, raises \$4.5 billion in revenue'. It stated—

... a new University of Queensland analysis of 87,665 alcohol-related visits to hospital emergency departments over three years has found the tax made no difference.

The article went on to say—

If teenagers are looking for a good time and find their favourite tippie of alcopops has doubled in price, they're not going to go home and have a hot mug of chocolate.

They are going to go out there and still drink. It is our role as members of parliament to create safe precincts for them to go to and have a good time.

One thing I have always disliked about governments is the nanny state philosophy. If you do the right thing in our society and if you do not harm anybody, why should you be punished? To all those people who go out on Friday and Saturday nights and do the right thing and live their lives and do not cause any harm to anybody else, good on you for doing that. Those who tend towards violence are the ones we need to punish and we need to punish them severely. Those individuals are the ones ruining it for everybody else in our society.

Violence in our society is becoming more and more prevalent and as a father of three young children it is worrying me greatly. In common with all parents, I want them to grow up in a better world than we have today. Whether it is domestic violence, fights in our local nightclub precincts, road rage or those who just go about living their lives but happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, violence is the true issue we need to deal with. With regard to alcohol, through education we can try to instil in the next generation that they do not need to binge drink. However, I am very disappointed to see this backflip tonight from a man who has so-called great convictions to make a difference.