



Liquor Amendment (Parliamentary Precincts) Bill.

Second Reading

The Hon. IAN MACDONALD (Minister for Primary Industries) [11.47 a.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave for the second reading speech to be incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

- This Bill may be short, but it has a very significant purpose and will permanently alter the shape of liquor service at Parliament House.
- This Government has been committed to improving the harm minimisation measures related to the sale and service of alcohol.
- One important aspect of this commitment is applying the same rules to ourselves, that apply to the community at large.
- This bill embodies the Government's commitment to applying the New South Wales liquor laws to Parliament House.
- It might surprise many to learn that the Parliamentary precincts are exempt from the operation of the liquor laws.
- Not just in this State, but across all the States of Australia.
- The exemption dates back to at least the early 1900s.
- Regardless of its long-standing nature, the time has come to remove this archaic exemption, and bring the New South Wales Parliament into line with current harm minimisation practices.
- In place of the exemption, the Bill will enable the Governor to issue a licence authorising the sale of liquor within the Parliamentary precincts.
- This type of licence is commonly known as a Governor's licence.
- It is the type of liquor licence granted to unique Crown facilities like the Sydney Opera House, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and the Royal Botanic Gardens and the Domain.
- The Governor will be authorised to impose conditions on the Governor's licence granted in respect of Parliament House.
- As with all Governor's licences, the licence conditions will delineate the boundary of the licensed premises, identifying areas in which liquor may be served.
- The licence will also name the person, or licensee, who is the holder of the licence.
- These licence conditions will be formulated through discussions between Government Officers, and Parliamentary Officers, nominated by the Presiding Officers.
- Some time will be required for the officials to finalise appropriate licence conditions.
- The Government expects that this process will be carried out and completed during the winter recess.
- This is why it is proposed that the Bill commence on a day appointed by proclamation.
- All attempts will be made to ensure that the Governor's licence will be place prior to the Spring sitting session of the Parliament.
- This Bill ensures the principal object of the Liquor Act - harm minimisation - and responsible service of alcohol requirements will apply to Parliament House.
- Many of these requirements are already evident within the Parliamentary precincts.

- for example, food and beverage staff have been trained in the responsible service of alcohol,
- and relevant regulatory signage has been posted in bar areas.
- In these situations, the Bill will endorse what has already been a common practice here for some time.
- The Bill will make one other important amendment.
- It will insert a provision into the Parliamentary Precincts Act 1997 that will enable the Presiding Officers to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Director of Liquor and Gaming.
- The Director of Liquor and Gaming is the chief regulatory officer in the Department of Gaming and Racing.
- This provision is similar to existing section 27, which allows the Presiding Officers and the Commissioner of Police to enter into a memorandum of understanding regarding the exercise of police powers within and around the Parliamentary precincts.
- The Director of Liquor and Gaming has similar functions and responsibilities to the Police Commissioner, for enforcement of the liquor laws.
- The Government's liquor law inspectors undertake a range of compliance-related functions under the Director's delegation.
- As part of this role, liquor law inspectors have entry powers to all licensed venues.
- It is important that inspectors, along with police, have appropriate access to Parliament House for the purpose of the liquor laws.
- The proposed power enabling a memorandum of understanding will provide certainty for Members of Parliament, Parliamentary officials, and liquor law inspectors.
- As with the conditions which will apply to the Governor's licence, Government officers will develop the memorandum of understanding in consultation with the Presiding Officers or their nominees.
- None of the measures in the Bill raise any issues relevant to the Legislation Review Committee's "scrutiny of Bills" function. I am satisfied that the Bill:
- Will not trespass unduly on personal rights or liberties;
- Will not make rights, liberties or obligations unduly dependent upon insufficiently defined administrative powers or upon non-renewable decisions; and
- Will not delegate legislative powers.
- I commend the Bill to the House.

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