



Kelvin Thomson MP

Federal Labor Member for Wills

Crackdown on late night venues to curb binge drinking

Kelvin Thomson, Federal Member for Wills, today welcomed the *Alcohol Action Plan* announced by Victorian Premier, John Brumby to address the significant economic and social impact that growing alcohol abuse is having with our community.

“On the 1st May I wrote to the Victorian Minister for Consumer Affairs, Tony Robinson, expressing concern about the consequences of the dramatic rise in late night licensed venues in Melbourne’s CBD and adjoining inner suburbs”, Mr Thomson said.

The five year \$37.2 million *Alcohol Action Plan* will target alcohol-related violence in the inner city through the introduction, by the Director of Liquor Licensing, of a three month trial of 2am late entry bans for pubs, bars and nightclubs.

During the trial, licensees in the inner city council areas will not allow patrons to enter their venues from 2am to 7am. Patrons who are already in a venue can remain until closing time but cannot leave and re-enter premises.

“In July last year I also wrote to the Police Minister and to Melbourne, Moreland and Moonee Valley City Councils to express the need to take action to curb anti-social behaviour related to late night venue operations.

“At the time it was reported there were 146 premises with permits to serve alcohol to 3am or beyond. The number of licences issued beyond 3am had risen by 43% in 5 years”.

“The consequences of the proliferation of these venues have been severe. They are a magnet for drugs and drug-related crime, for binge drinking, and for crimes of violence”.

Part of the Alcohol Action Plan will include a twelve month freeze on new late-night licences in Port Phillip, Stonnington, Melbourne and Yarra municipalities was implemented as of the 2nd May and will prevent any new applications for liquor licences that would operate after 1am.

The Plan will also involve using underage operatives to prevent the sale of over eighteen years of age products to minors.

“A 1997 report that was undertaken in Perth by the National Centre for Research into the prevention of drug abuse found that premises with later trading hours had significantly higher assaults in and around their vicinity, which were associated with extended trading hours, alcohol sales and consumption.

“I support any action that can be taken to make Melbourne’s streets safer at night, and to keep our city the most liveable throughout the world”, Mr Thomson concluded.

A copy of Mr Thomson’s letter to Mr Robinson is attached.

Monday 12th May 2008

**For further information please contact Anthony Cianflone from Kelvin Thomson’s office
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