

LIQUOR LICENSING REFORMS

63. Ms C.M. ROWE to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to creating vibrancy across Western Australia, to supporting jobs in the hospitality sector and to making it easier for business to operate. Can the minister outline to the house how this government's liquor licensing reforms will allow hotels and bars to expand their businesses and transform WA's festival culture?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I would like to thank the member for her question and for her robust advocacy on behalf of small business, in particular the hospitality outlets in her electorate and across the state. I have good news. There is good news. The Liquor Control Amendment Bill, which I will read for a first and second time later this afternoon, will introduce a range of improvements to the way we control liquor outlets in the state. It will keep an election commitment to free up a lot of the constraints and obligations that were placed on established venues in the past and will boost hospitality and tourism across the state.

I refer to pop-ups. In recent times, and probably for several years, most members will have heard complaints from established venues and the peak bodies that represent them about the manner in which their businesses have been impacted by the proliferation of pop-ups, specifically during the peak season. Pop-ups often open for about only three months in the prime time of the year—that is, in summer, when the biggest crowds are out. Established venues are confronted with the challenge of having to deal with an environment in which pop-ups are often authorised by local governments without reference to the established venues. Pop-up operators come in for a short time, employ part-time employees and do not commit to long-term training as established venues do. In much the same way, they do not contribute to the community.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: They do not confront anywhere near the sort of challenges that an established venue does for 12 months of the year. Regardless of the member for Dawesville's advocacy for them, they do not make the same sort of contribution.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville!

Mr P. PAPALIA: For many years, advocates for established venues across the state such as pubs, cafes, and small businesses begged the previous government to take action, to stand up for small businesses and to give them a level playing field. That is what we are doing. We will enable established venues to employ their extended trading permits to host pop-ups on adjacent land such as a car park or a laneway that they own in freehold or control in leasehold. That will enable them to establish their own micro-festivals, effectively, which was a commitment by the government. Under their extended trading permits, they will also be given the authority to participate in festivals around Perth that are run by third party organisers and to host pop-ups with no requirement to provide food. It will give established venues a leg up. They will be able to use their current extended trading permits. They will not have to get an additional licence. They will not have to compete with fly-by-nighters who come in for a short time and do not confront the same challenges that they do. It will not solve all the problems, but it will give small businesses a fairer playing field. I look forward to receiving the support of my friend and colleague the member for South Perth, who, as we have just heard, cares about small businesses, unlike many of his colleagues. I look forward to him supporting the amendment when we introduce it.