

## SUBMISSION ON THE DRAFT LIQUOR AMENDMENT (24-HOUR ECONOMY) BILL

June 2020

The Alliance thanks the NSW government for the opportunity to make comments on this draft Bill. While the area – Liquor licencing – is outside our ordinary area of comment, venues with gambling rooms are also licenced premises, and the activities and behaviours these draft amendments address have significant implications for, and are impacted by, gambling on those premises.

For these reasons, we make general points only in relation to this part of the consultation period.

1. The Alliance welcomes moves by the government to increase the opportunities for non-gambling entertainment at venues, and its recognition of the importance of poker machine-free small bars and venues. Restrictions on live music or other entertainment have prevented some venues from diversifying their income and encouraged them to rely on poker machine revenues. The Alliance hopes these changes lead to more venues becoming poker machine-free and reinstating their live entertainment areas.

The Alliance recognises that noise issues in relation to entertainment, especially in a 24-hour context, will occur. We urge the government to ensure there is a workable balance between a lively night-time economy, with alternate forms of entertainment to gambling, and amenity for the neighbours.

We are also alarmed at the prospect that gambling could be allowed around the clock as the government makes further changes to support a 24-hour economy. The Alliance is, and will continue to campaign, for reductions in existing gambling hours, from the current 18 hours per day.

2. Given the lack of transparency over breaches of the *Gaming Machine Act*, we support the principles behind the change to a transparent demerit point system for breaches of liquor laws. We hope that the government will consider incorporating similar demerit points and sanctions for breaches of the *Gaming Machine Act* into a broader Liquor & Gambling demerit system, with real-time reporting of complaints, actions and sanctions.

3. We note, and applaud the government's concerns for safety in relation to a 24 hour economy. We urge the government to take community safety in relation to gambling harm just as seriously, with a review of the gambling laws and regulations in the very near future.

4. We urge the government to amend its plans for the "Cumulative Impact Assessment Framework" to include poker machine numbers and densities, and other gambling outlets such as TAB (shopfronts & terminals), Keno and lottery sales points. The Alliance understands the principle behind the Framework, which is to allow better planning decisions based on existing facilities, socio-economic factors, risk and problems. The system is designed to manage "adverse community impacts" and "the well-being of the local or broader community". Our communities are adversely impacted by gambling venues, and for a true impact assessment, we believe poker machine numbers must be included.

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