# Community and health leaders welcome draft alcohol laws in South Australia to prevent gendered violence

**19 December 2024:**

Today community and health leaders have welcomed the South Australian Government's proposed changes to alcohol laws, to prioritise the health and wellbeing of women and children.

The draft *Liquor Licensing (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2024* (the draft Bill) is the first of its kind in the country, and affirms the SA Government's commitment to reduce gendered violence through alcohol law reform.

Dr Catherine Earl, Policy and Research Director, Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) said, "We congratulate the SA Government for leading the country on developing a draft Bill that reflects the recommendations of the Federal Government's Rapid Review Expert Panel.

"This is a critical moment in Australia's progress in addressing the crisis of family, domestic and sexual violence."

The draft Bill includes clear primary objectives to prevent gendered violence and to restrict alcohol sales and delivery timeframes.

Scott Wilson, CEO, Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Council SA (ADAC) said, "Many women in our community have shared how alcohol is a major factor in their experience of violence.

"We know that this violence gets more severe late at night, when alcohol is being delivered into their home. This draft Bill includes meaningful measures that would make a real difference in preventing and reducing violence."

Ross Womersley, CEO of the South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS) said, "We are pleased to see that this proposed legislation takes a strong position on preventing gendered violence by recognising alcohol as a harmful product.

"SACOSS also welcomes proposed changes to limit the rapid delivery of alcohol to intoxicated people in the home, which will reduce alcohol harms in our community, especially for women and children."

Kym Valentine, an experienced television/theatre actor and Survivor Advocate, applauded SA Government for taking action on National Cabinet's commitment.

"As someone who has experienced the harm from alcohol fueled violence, I want to say thank you.

"Victim survivors and children in South Australia and across the country are watching, and see that you are making our safety and wellbeing a priority.

"I want to encourage other states and territories to learn from your leadership and follow suit. This Bill will not only prevent and reduce the severity of violence, it will save lives."

At National Cabinet in September, First Ministers agreed to take action on alcohol to help prevent gender-based violence and violence against children in Australia.

The Prime Minister, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP also acknowledged that tackling the impacts of alcohol on violence was a priority.

A media statement released by the Prime Minister and agreed to by First Ministers stated, "Acknowledging the role that systems and industries can play in exacerbating violence, State and Territory First Ministers agreed to review alcohol laws and its impact on family and domestic violence victims to identify and share best practice and reforms and to report back to National Cabinet on progress."

Professor Michael Salter, Professor of Criminology, UNSW said, "Alcohol is a driver of violence against women and children in this country, and the alcohol industry is powerful and many of our leaders have been afraid to confront them.

"This proposed bill is a major step forward in preventing alcohol-related gendered violence, and the SA Government should be congratulated for stepping up to this challenge."

Michael White, Executive Officer, South Australian Network of Drug and Alcohol Services (SANDAS) said, "We are particularly pleased that this draft Bill includes the introduction of a two hour safety pause between alcohol being ordered, and when it is delivered.

"Rapid delivery results in prolonged and high levels of alcohol use, which significantly increases the likelihood of people experiencing harm."

Professor Jacqueline Bowden, Director of the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA) at Flinders University said, "Alcohol is one of the leading causes of preventable death and disease in Australia, contributing to around 2,000 deaths per year and is strongly implicated in domestic, family and sexual violence.

"Now more than ever we need evidence-based policy approaches to prevent alcohol harms, and it's great to see the SA Government progressing this with the draft Bill."

Sally Underdown, SA/NT State Manager for the Alcohol and Drug Foundation (ADF) said, "We commend the SA Government for taking action to reduce alcohol harms in the community.

"These amendments are an important step in addressing the risks associated with the rapid rise of online alcohol sales and delivery."

The SA Government is currently consulting stakeholders on the draft Bill, with submissions open until 17 February 2025.

Dr Earl added, "We look forward to working with the SA Government to ensure the voices of people with a lived experience are heard in this process, and that any gaps in the draft Bill are addressed with evidence-based, best practice alcohol harm prevention approaches."

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**Available for interview:** Dr Catherine Earl, Policy and Research Director, FARE**;** Scott Wilson, CEO, ADAC; Kym Valentine, Survivor Advocate; Michael White, Executive Officer, SANDAS**;** Professor Michael Salter, Professor of Criminology, UNSW**;** and Professor Jacqueline Bowden, Director, NCETA.

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