



STUART GRIMLEY MP

Member for Western Victoria
State Leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party

MEDIA RELEASE



Grimley says New Data Shows Liquor Bill Must be Delayed

13 October 2021

State leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party, Stuart Grimley MP says that the Liquor Control Reform Amendment Bill 2021 should be delayed with many examples of new data coming out showing the damage the online delivery sector is causing to Victoria's most vulnerable.

Whilst Mr Grimley supports the industry, he says appropriate safeguards need to be in place for children and those at risk of family violence or alcoholism.

Despite the Bill undergoing five years of 'consultation', many recommendations discussed extensively (such as saturation zones for vulnerable areas) have been completely ignored from the Bill.

The data released in October by the Sax Institute¹ found:

- 60% of online alcohol delivery companies did not comply with the legal requirement to ensure purchasers provided their date of birth to confirm they were over 18.
- 15% of online alcohol delivery companies did not mention on their website that it is illegal to sell, supply or obtain alcohol on behalf of someone under 18.
- Only 22% of services specified on their website that someone over 18 had to accept the delivery.

A recent report by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) found that since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there had been an \$800 million increase in alcohol sales into Victorian homes between 2019 and 2020 – that's an extra \$15 million in sales each week.

This means alcohol companies have been profiting off the back of increasing family violence and an increase in death by consumption of alcohol.

The Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association surveyed services across the state between December and January (2020-21) regarding client presentations and the impact of COVID-19. Of the 38 agencies surveyed, **70 per cent** said alcohol featured either "a lot more" or "a bit more" as a drug of concern.

The Bill (which is due for debate at the end of the October) has a significant **six** set of amendments by parties including Derryn Hinch's Justice Party. This demonstrates just how necessary a review of the Bill is.

Quotes Attributable to Stuart Grimley MP:

"This Bill needs to be delayed until an assessment of this significant new evidence is undertaken.

The evidence quoted in my media release doesn't even touch the surface – there is evidence everywhere pointing to the adverse affects of home delivery during COVID-19. I'm not against online delivery of alcohol, but we need to have adequate safeguards in place to make sure vulnerable people aren't being exploited by alcohol companies.

The fact that there are six sets of amendments from different parties, including mine, demonstrates that there are big problems with this Bill."

Office of Stuart Grimley Media Contact: Callum Whitehead / 0437 096 982 / callum.whitehead@parliament.vic.gov.au

¹ The Sax Institute: Noyes, Palermo et al, *Online liquor gets audited: a review of regulatory controls and supply practices of online liquor retailers in NSW, Australia, 2021*