



Media Release

BORSAK'S BILL A DANGEROUS PLAY FOR VIOLENCE OVER VIBRANCY

19 November 2018: NSW MLC Robert Borsak has been accused of propagating a dangerous fiction that would derail Sydney's new vibrancy, threaten community health and safety, and put the city's frontline emergency workers back in the firing line of violence, again.

The NSW/ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAAPA) says claims by the Shooters Fishers and Farmers Party that Sydney's Kings Cross and CBD entertainment precincts have been needlessly sacrificed are fake and misleading.

The claim is one of five deceptive assertions made by Mr Borsak in speaking to the *Liquor Legislation Amendment (Repeal of the Lockout Laws) Bill 2018* in the NSW Legislative Council.

NAAPA, which comprises 48 groups across frontline emergency services, law enforcement, health, community and research organisations, has categorically debunked Mr Borsak's claims.

Police Association of NSW President Tony King says it cannot be disputed that the 'last entry' and 'last drinks' measures have been life-saving, with a sharp drop in alcohol-related violence since the 2014 laws were introduced.

"For Mr Borsak to say that a trickle-down in the rate of violence in the years prior to 2014 was good enough for Sydneysiders is appalling. It was the decisive measures introduced in 2014 that have given the community the safety, the freedom and the confidence to socialise after dark," Mr King said.

FARE Chief Executive Michael Thorn is critical of Mr Borsak and the others who are so willing to talk down Sydney's night-time economy.

"Mr Borsak's claim that Kings Cross and CBD businesses have been decimated is pure fiction. While Sydney's nightlife profile has diversified, The City of Sydney's own data shows it has the strongest and most concentrated night-time economy in Australia with year-on-year growth since 2011," Mr Thorn said.

"The number of establishments reached an all-time high in 2016 and again in 2017 and the city has never had more jobs or greater choice of drinks, entertainment and food options," he said.



“We’ve presented Senator Borsak and all New South Wales MPs with evidence from the frontline, so the NSW Parliament can be confident about the health of Sydney’s nightlife economy, and the indisputable success of the trading hour measures,” Mr Thorn said.

Mr King says Sydney is in good company, being one of many international party places that benefits from harm minimisation measures, and is also well supported through increased police and transport options.

“This is a galling Bill and any repeal of the 2014 measures would be a curse on Sydney again, shifting the balance back to ‘violence over vibrancy’ and a return to the devastating toll that we know harms all of us,” Mr King said.

Tony King and Michael Thorn are both available for interview.

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