

LIQUOR CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL 2013

Second Reading

Resumed from 12 June.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland) [4.00 pm]: I would like to start by congratulating the member for Collie–Preston for bringing the Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2013 into this house. This bill was introduced and read in back in June this year. I congratulate him on bringing forward a really important piece of legislation. It is legislation that would bring us into line with just about every other state in Australia that has moved in this direction. The fact is that South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory have also been slow to move on the secondary supply of alcohol to minors, but other states have some laws in place to deal with this issue. We have a government that talks a lot about community safety and the priority that it places on it, but when it comes to delivering, it does very little. Just today in question time I highlighted that when it comes to community safety, the government likes to talk the talk, but it does not get around to walking the walk. Everything just takes too long. It is too complicated; it is too difficult; it is not simple. The government has every excuse under the sun.

I would like to remind people that in the lead-up to the state election in March this year, the government said that it would give priority to community safety matters and, as a matter of priority, it would introduce legislation to remove vehicles from hoons on the second strike for offences that occurred in school zones or suburban streets. If that is too complicated or if it is not right, perhaps the government should not have promised it. It also said that it would confiscate unlicensed trail bikes when they are driven on the roads; so rather than just the regular penalty being applied, the government would have the right to seize these unlicensed trail bikes so that they could not continue to be driven on the roads. That seems to make sense, but again there has been nothing from the government. We have yet to see that legislation. The government said that graffiti was a problem and that it would have tough new legislation. It even gave that legislation a name and said that it would introduce the graffiti enforcement bill. We are still waiting to see even a draft of that. Of course, it also promised to toughen the home burglary laws for people who are assaulted. Again, we have not seen any detail of that proposition, let alone the legislation.

This government promised to give priority to community safety and community wellbeing, and these were supposedly its priorities. But six months later it has yet to even show us a bill. With only four sitting weeks left, there is no real prospect of any of these bills being passed this year. So we will get to February next year and we will still be in the position of having a year of legislative inaction by the Barnett government.

In contrast with the government, the member for Collie–Preston has been pretty quick to progress this legislation. It is a very important issue. No doubt many of us in this house have children and, as parents, we have dealt with many of the issues that arise when we have teenagers and older children. The fact is that it is illegal for a person under 18 years of age to purchase alcohol. It is illegal for a liquor store, a hotel or other drinking venue to sell alcohol to someone who is under the age of 18. That law is in place for a very important reason. It is because the community as a whole does not believe that people under 18 years of age should be drinking. That has been the community opinion with broad support for a very long time. Prior to that, the drinking age in Australia in just about every state was 21 years of age. I do not fully know the history of it, but I guess around the time of the Vietnam War there were some people who said, “We can send people off to fight for the country; why don’t we allow them to drink and have other entitlements?” The minimum age for drinking alcohol, I suppose, matched up aspects such as the voting age; the age for criminal responsibility; and the age at which someone was asked to fight in a war, especially given the compulsory call-up to the Vietnam War.

In recent times, though, a number of consequences have occurred. Some very prominent Australians have said that they think the drinking age should be raised. I think it is widely acknowledged that excessive alcohol consumption by young people, and for that matter by older people, is a real problem Australia-wide. A greater volume of alcohol is drunk now by Australians on a per capita basis than there was 10, 20, 30 or 50 years ago. This is a problem, but it is a particular problem when young people’s brains are still forming and they are still growing. There is also plenty of medical and other research that indicates that the earlier one starts drinking, the more likely they are to develop alcohol problems in later life. The more likely they are to become an alcoholic, the more likely they are to suffer other adverse health problems as a result of drinking alcohol. There is a direct correlation in very many studies worldwide between the age at which someone first starts drinking and the likelihood of them developing problems with alcohol in later life and developing health problems as well. That has caused people such as Ita Buttrose to call for the drinking age to be raised to 21. I think most of us concur that the combination of the age at which people start drinking, the amount they are drinking and the more-than-

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[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 30 October 2013]

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Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Roger Cook; Mr David Templeman; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr John McGrath; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Mick Murray

anecdotal reports that young people—and others no doubt—are drinking not just for enjoyment but also actually to get drunk is a very sad thing.

I come back to the issue that parents face in this regard, which is something the member for Collie–Preston focused on in his second reading speech; that is, it can be difficult for parents to say no. We hear stories that 13, 14, 15 and 16-year-olds turn around and say to their parents, “Mum, Dad, other kids are doing this. Other kids are drinking. Other parents allow it at their house. Why can’t I have it?” We hear stories that parents are buying alcohol for their 14, 15 and 16-year-old kids. We hear evidence when schoolies week is on of parents going into bottle shops and buying cartons of beer and other alcohol for their kids to drive down south with. That is just plainly irresponsible.

I think there is now a big disparity between the regulated environment of a hotel or licensed drinking venue and the unregulated environment of someone’s backyard or home. Most responsible parents would not like their child or young person under 18 years of age to be offered alcohol in someone else’s home when no permission has been given. I believe that the majority of people would not want the alcohol offered in any circumstances, but particularly in the circumstance when the parent is not even informed or asked for consent. Why should another parent be able to give alcohol to my 15, 16 or 17-year-old child when that child is by law not able to purchase it or be sold it in a pub, club or another venue? The answer very clearly is that they should not. Alcohol is a drug, and it has consequences. Depending on the age at which young people start drinking, it has ongoing health consequences for them in later life. This is very much a commonsense measure. If this government was serious about community safety and wellbeing, it would have brought forward this kind of measure a long time ago. It should probably have done this in its first term in government, because that is when most other Australian states moved on this. I get pretty tired of hearing the government say that it is a good idea but it is more complex than the opposition realises, and that the government will not vote for our bill because it will bring in its own bill and get the kudos itself for having done something—that is, when it eventually gets around to doing it! In the meantime, it is children and the community who are losing out.

If this government really cared about young people, it would vote for the member for Collie–Preston’s bill. It is a very simple amendment to the Liquor Control Act 1988 that would afford some protection for young people in this state. It would also send a very clear message to parents and other adults that if they supply alcohol to a minor, they must get the permission of their parents to give them that drug, because it is a drug. Although I am sure that many people in certain places have a different view from others in the community and think it is okay for a young person to have a toast of champagne, sherry in a trifle, a half glass of beer or whatever at the age of 15 or 16 years in the home and family environment, my view is it is up to parents to make that decision for their own children. If that is what parents allow their own children in their own home, so be it. However, nothing in the bill that the member for Collie–Preston is proposing prevents parents from doing that. If that is their culture and what they believe and has been the practice in their family or community for decades or even a short time, they are entitled to give their own child alcohol under supervision. Likewise, if a child is visiting their aunt or uncle or some other responsible adult and the parents have given permission for the consumption of alcohol, that would not be caught by this bill either.

A lot of parents object, when they allow their child to go to another family’s home perhaps to stay overnight or for a weekend or a week’s holiday, if their child is supplied a substance that they are not supplied in their own home and they do not have permission to supply to them. This also helps parents who want to be able to enforce their household rules. It is difficult to be able to enforce your household rules with teenagers when other households have supposedly different or more relaxed rules. I am in the position of having two children over the age of 18 and one child under the age of 18. Although I have no personal anecdote to tell members, I know from my experience and that of many of my electors that at things such as school balls, where some kids are 17 years old and others are 18 years old, it certainly is a problem. I do not intend to talk at length about parties before, during or after school balls, dinner dances, socials, discos or whatever the occasion, but it is becoming difficult and this will increasingly be the case with the half-cohort coming through school and more young people turning 18 years in year 12. We will end up with a situation in a couple of years’ time when that half-cohort reaches year 12, and children born in the first half of the year will be 18 years of age. We will have this mix of kids who are over the age of 18 years and under the age of 18 years.

Parents need to know where they stand. A law such as this will give parents the comfort of being able to say, “I’m not providing the alcohol, because the law says that if I don’t have permission from each and every one of those young people’s parents, I am not any more at liberty to give you alcohol than the bottle shop or the hotel is to sell you alcohol.” I think it is simple. Maybe a lot of people will say that that is surely commonsense. How did we get by without a law such as this in the past? I think it is because the prevalence of alcohol drinking has not been at the level it currently is. People such as Ita Buttrose and others are speaking out because this is a national problem that is affecting people around the country. Whether she is absolutely dinkum about a drinking age of

21, I do not know; personally, I think it would be very hard to wind the clock back and tell young people they have to wait until they are 21. But maybe there is some merit in the age being 19, because at least then there would not be this mix that there is now in year 12 of half the cohort turning 18. People can get other things at other ages; people can get a driver's licence at 17. We have not said that everything should be uniformly 18, so I do not see that it necessarily has to be the same age. But I think what Ita Buttrose and others have been grappling with is the outcome. This is a huge problem. To me, it is morally wrong to give someone else's child who is under the age of 18 alcohol without the permission of the parent to do it in a home environment.

[Member's time extended.]

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: If this government was dinkum about supporting the community and interested in doing the right thing, as are people such as Samantha Menezes, a mother of four children ranging in age between eight and 21—I note that my children are aged between 14 and 24—it would help those parents greatly. It will reduce, hopefully, the amount of alcohol consumed by young people. But, more importantly, it will send a very strong message to the community that the law does not support people under the age of 18 drinking without strict parental permission. Some people might try to suggest that this will have unintended consequences or be somehow more complicated than it actually is. Whichever way we go, there will be problems. Will this be the silver bullet that deals with all alcohol problems and stops absolutely everyone under the age of 18 from drinking? No, it will not, but it is an important step. I note that it is a step that has been taken in just about every other state of Australia. It is the right thing to do. It is the responsible thing to do. It is irresponsible to hold this law up, and that is why I am very keen today to see the member for Collie-Preston's bill go to a vote. We will see the government's response and whether it wants to support parents in this community who want an end to under-age drinking, and who do not want their child in an environment in which it is seen to be okay and in which the law supports other random adults giving their child alcohol that it is illegal to buy at a pub or bottle shop. It is wrong; let us make it legally wrong. Let us send this strong message to the community. All of us in this chamber today have the opportunity to send that message and to start putting it into law. If members vote for the member for Collie-Preston's bill today at the second reading stage, we could go straight into consideration in detail. This is a very small bill. I am confident we could then send the bill to the Legislative Council and it could become law before the end of the year. That would be a great thing.

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.21 pm]: I rise to make a few comments on the Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2013. This is obviously an area of my portfolio that is of acute interest because of alcohol and its impact on our community. In relation to health services and expenditure, this issue represents a huge burden upon the health budget. It is important that we examine this bill. I commend the member for Collie-Preston for bringing it forward. It is not dissimilar to the changes made to the Tobacco Products Control Act about two or three years ago now. Those changes were brought forward by the then member for Alfred Cove, an Independent member of this place, and they were passed with the support of both sides of Parliament. Why were they passed? They were passed because the changes that the former member for Alfred Cove made to the Tobacco Products Control Act were straightforward, and were accepted as commonsense and as the orthodoxy of where the tobacco debate was at—they were uncontroversial. That is also the case with this bill before us. What this bill seeks to do is fairly straightforward. The measures in this bill are legislated for in other states and I hope no-one in this place thinks it is okay for an adult to provide alcohol to a young person in their home without the express permission of that young person's parents. This is very straightforward, unambitious, commonsense legislation. I know the minister has a review of the Liquor Control Act on at the moment, and the Minister for Health constantly reviews the Tobacco Products Control Act, as he is required to under that legislation. However, the Minister for Health, to his credit, accepted that what the former member for Alfred Cove brought forward on the Tobacco Products Control Act was very simple and straightforward stuff. The government accepted those changes in a mature, dispassionate and objective way, because they were straightforward, uncontroversial and, quite frankly, accepted by the community as doing good. That is what we are doing today. By virtue of the member for Collie-Preston, we are bringing forward legislation which is very straightforward and commonsense and about which there is no argument.

We might reflect from time to time that we stand in this place at a point in history, and I can only imagine that in the early 1970s people were perhaps confronting a similar debate about tobacco. People might have said that it was a bit unreasonable to expect people to stop smoking in restaurants or to expect them not to smoke on planes—that it was a bit unfair. They might have asked about the workplace. They might have said that next people would be expected to leave the workplace to have a smoke. They would have thought that was really unreasonable and said that it could not be done. Of course, no-one nowadays questions that it is right to have those laws in place—no-one at all questions these things. We are now confronted with similar legislation and in five, 10 or 20 years' time, people will ask whether it was really debated. They will comment that it must have been a bizarre situation for people to have thought there was another side to the argument. This is straightforward stuff and it is stuff we should be doing. This is not stuff that will interfere with the detail of the

minister's review of the Liquor Control Act; it is straightforward. I suspect that the minister's own review of the act will also conclude in this way. What we should do today is just say, "Fair cop. Thank you, member for Collie–Preston, for bringing this bill forward. We will vote for it, and we look forward to seeing what the Minister for Racing and Gaming has to say when his review is concluded." That is a review that we have been waiting and waiting for. That review was announced early last year. It was formally started towards the end of last year; is that right, minister?

Mr T.K. Waldron: Yes, at the end of December.

Mr R.H. COOK: It was supposed to report by the end of June, and then by the end of September, and we are now waiting for it to be brought down some time in November.

Mr T.K. Waldron: Yes.

Mr R.H. COOK: That review is ongoing at a glacial pace, missing deadline after deadline that the minister himself has set. I do not know what the delay is. But there should be no delay for this very simple and commonsense change to the legislation.

Alcohol is a drug that permeates our society. It is everywhere. It is one of the most destructive drugs in our society. It is also the most popular drug, and the one that costs our nation the most. But it is because alcohol has such prevalence in our society that we find this legislation somewhat uncomfortable. I saw the minister squirm when he was asked a question in Parliament the other day about Cricket Australia's attitude to Healthway WA's campaign around sport. I suspect that in a few years' time, people will say, "Do you remember when the members of the Australian cricket team had that drug advertising written across them? Do you remember when Ricky Ponting, this leader of sport and fitness and youth and vitality for the nation, had that drug slogan written across him? What a peculiar state of affairs that was. What a bizarre thing that was".

Mr T.K. Waldron: I hope I am still around!

Mr R.H. COOK: The minister will be, because I think this debate is starting to gain some momentum now. It is extraordinary that Cricket Australia should be saying, "Hang on. We are not going to have these little messages that might interfere with our broader branding. We do not want to detract from the branding of this major drug sponsor and our cricket." Do members remember how the world was going to come to an end because we could not have the Benson and Hedges Ashes series, or something like that, and people were trying to visualise the ring around the cricket field without "Benson and Hedges" emblazoned across it? We must put some historic context to this.

But imagine if we were talking today about a drug that had been discovered recently. Let us say it was some sort of artificial cannabis, because that is the thing that tends to be occupying our legislative minds lately. Imagine if the minister stood in this place and said that this new drug accounts for 3.3 per cent of the total burden of disease and injury in Australia, 4.9 per cent in males and 1.6 per cent in females. Imagine if the minister said that this new drug is second only to tobacco as a preventable cause of drug-related death and hospitalisation, and that between 1992 and 2001—so this is not a new drug, but let us say it was—more than 31 000 deaths were attributed to the risky or high-risk consumption of this new drug. Imagine if the minister said that in the eight years between 1993–94 and 2000–01, this new drug was responsible for over half a million completed hospital episodes. But of course we are not talking about a new drug. We are talking about alcohol. Imagine the outcry that there would be.

Mr P. Abetz: You would never get it registered!

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes, we would never get it registered. We would be in in this place in the blink of an eye to legislate against it. Imagine if we said that this new drug accounted for 13 per cent of all deaths among 14 to 17-year-old Australians. Imagine if we said that it was estimated that this new drug was responsible for the death of one Australian teenager and more than 60 hospitalisations each week. Can members imagine that? Let us get some perspective here: we are not talking about some harmless activity when providing alcohol to a child under the age of 18; we are talking about a deadly drug, which is why, historically, we have restricted the sale of this drug. We have kept it behind closed doors—smoked windows, usually—and it has remained highly stigmatised. We have highly regulated the times during which one can enter a place to consume this drug; of course, we are talking about pubs. It is not unreasonable for the member for Collie–Preston to bring this legislation forward, because, as the member for Midland said, all this legislation will do is stop an adult providing alcohol to someone under the age of 18 without the express permission of that person's parent, guardian or carer. All we are doing with this legislation is providing support to adults who are supervising young people and saying, "No, sorry; there are laws against this, so I can't provide you with that alcohol."

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 30 October 2013]

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Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Roger Cook; Mr David Templeman; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr John McGrath; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Mick Murray

We all know the pressures around this; we all know about the social coercion in relation to alcohol and we all know how much we enjoy consuming it, but it is important to have this legislation in place to bring about these very commonsense, simple and straightforward changes to make sure that we provide some regulation and support around the supply of alcohol.

The statistics I mentioned earlier are from a report by the National Health and Medical Research Council titled “Alcohol and health in Australia”. It provides us with a stark reminder of just how damaging alcohol can be in our society. It reads, in part —

Alcohol consumption accounted for 3.3 per cent of the total burden of disease and injury in Australia in 2003; 4.9 per cent in males and 1.6 per cent in females.

Further along, the report continues —

In Australia:

Alcohol is second only to tobacco as a preventable cause of drug-related death and hospitalisation

between 1992 and 2001 more than 31,000 deaths were attributed to risky or high risk alcohol consumption

in the eight years between 1993–94 and 2000–01, over half a million completed hospital episodes were associated with alcohol

As I said before, alcohol accounts for 13 per cent of all deaths among 14 to 17-year-old Australians—more than one in 10. It has been estimated that one Australian teenager dies and more than 60 are hospitalised each week from alcohol-related causes.

From that point of view, I think this legislation is very straightforward. It is not controversial; this is an issue on which the community, which is watching our actions, is almost unanimous. Research undertaken by the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth found, from a sample of 1 600 people, that 88 per cent supported the legislation in relation to secondary supply, and only five per cent opposed what we are trying to do here today. Amongst parents with children currently at school, 91 per cent supported what we are doing and only three per cent opposed it. We are not standing here today sticking out our political necks and undertaking a task for which there is no community support. There is ample community support. There is no reason that we should not simply give this piece of legislation the tick. If there are some technical concerns, we have the consideration in detail stage. The minister took the opportunity to tweak the Tobacco Products Control Amendment Bill brought in by the member for Alfred Cove to ensure that it fitted with the government’s overall legislative perspective. However, he did not push back on the principles of what the member for Alfred Cove was trying to do and today the Minister for Racing and Gaming should not push back on the principles of what the member for Collie–Preston is trying to do, because this is pretty straightforward stuff.

As the member for Midland said, this is not a silver bullet. As I am sure the minister is finding out in his review of the Liquor Control Act, this is a complex area in which to exercise public policy. We know that people like to consume alcohol; I am amongst them. It is highly prevalent. A huge amount of economic activity is driven by the consumption of alcohol and a lot of people are employed in the industry surrounding alcohol. This is very simple, straightforward and effective legislation that we can bring forward. The minister might say it is pretty hard to police this. How do we know whether they have permission and all that sort of stuff? But we are not blazing a trail here. We have slipped behind other jurisdictions in Australia. Western Australia has a strong tradition of being ahead of the game, particularly in tobacco legislation, but we are significantly behind the game on this. Secondary supply legislation has been in place in New South Wales since 2007; in Queensland since 2009; in Tasmania since 2009; and in Victoria since 2011. Lord knows the Northern Territory has a reputation for enjoying alcohol and even it legislated in this area in 2011. We are playing catch-up and marking time with the other states by legislating in this way today. From that point of view, there is nothing to fear when supporting this bill. There is nothing controversial about it from a public opinion point of view or a legislative point of view.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr R.H. COOK: There is nothing controversial about how this will be played out on the ground. We know that this is not a silver bullet; this will not end alcohol abuse in our community. This will not stop the serious impact of alcohol on our economy and our health system. It will not stop the trauma that it brings to many families, but it is a good first step because it will demonstrate to young people that alcohol is a serious drug and has to be used responsibly. This is about starting the process of undermining that bland and dumb acceptance of alcohol as prevalent in our society and somehow something that we should take for granted. To consume alcohol to our heart’s content is not a right. We need to think about the public policy consequences and the effect on our economy and families. This is the first commonsense step.

Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Roger Cook; Mr David Templeman; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr John McGrath; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Mick Murray

I do not know about other members of this place, but I occasionally welcome the odd angry tweet from the Australian Hotels Association in response to some of my opinions on alcohol. I place on record that I do not believe the problem with alcohol abuse in our society exists in our pubs and our clubs. That is where we have the opportunity to control it. I think the biggest problem our communities face is the rampant rollout of cut-price bottle shops, which, for some reason, we do not have the legislative clout to stop. I want to draw upon an example in my electorate alone.

Mr T.K. Waldron interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes; it is planning legislation, is it not?

In one block just down the road from my office, there is a bottle shop attached to the pub, within about 200 metres of that there is a Liquorland bottle shop and within about another 100 metres of that—I have not seen the Taj Mahal, but I suspect it is not much bigger than the tilt-up building that is going up at the moment—there will be a Dan Murphy’s bottle shop. It is a monument to the alcohol that is flooding our community. I commend the member for Maylands, who has had some success in stopping this stuff. I am really concerned about just how big these bottle shops are and how aggressively they market to our community. I cannot for the life of me see the public good in the current rollout of all these cut-price bottle shops. Do people want cheap alcohol? Of course they do. We all want to buy a nice bottle of wine or a slab of beer that is a bit cheaper than it is down the road, but that is not the point. That is not what we are here for. We are here to manage the public policy surrounding these things. We all know that these bottle shops, if left to their own devices, will wreak extraordinary havoc on our community.

We have gone through a period in our community when we have said, “Let us wind back the closing hours for pubs because we know how to manage alcohol. We don’t need a paternalistic state government telling us when we can drink.” We now seem to be letting bottle shops sell alcohol as they like because they are just shops like any other part of the community. We are starting to come to the realisation that we have never managed this stuff well as individuals. Perhaps that is why we had restricted trading hours. Perhaps that is why we have a stigma around drinking alcohol in pubs, perhaps driven by the church. Perhaps that is why, when the Salvation Army men and women came around with the box in the pubs inviting people to give them their loose change, people thought, “I’m not supposed to be here. I’m drinking. I will give some money to the poor.” They relied upon the stigma around the consumption of alcohol. Perhaps that stigma around the consumption of alcohol was holding us back. It was not what we might consider to be responsible adults taking alcohol in a manner that does not need to be regulated. Perhaps we are not up to this. I really look forward to seeing what the minister’s review reveals.

Mr T.K. Waldron: So am I!

Mr R.H. COOK: I am really keen to see it, minister, if we can have no further delays. It is important that we get hold of this stuff. The changes to the laws for small bars that the member for Rockingham made when he was the Minister for Racing and Gaming were part of the solution to changing the pattern of the consumption of alcohol.

Mr T.K. Waldron interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes.

What I am trying to say is that, yes, this a complex area in which to exercise public policy. This is not straightforward. However, one aspect of this is straightforward. There is one aspect of this area that we can act on today, because it is quite simple. We can say that we got that bit right and now we will look at the other bits that are more complex and respond to those in a comprehensive way. But today we should do one thing—that is, support this very simple, straightforward, commonsense, responsible, uncontroversial, legislatively sound piece of legislation, which will simply legislate against the secondary supply of alcohol to minors without the express permission of their parent or guardian, because it is the right thing to do. This is straightforward. This is not difficult. I know that the minister will resolve all these issues through his liquor review, but today we should just act on this one important element. Lord knows we are not getting any younger—we could be significantly older before we see the review and we could be significantly older again by the time we see the legislation as a result of the review. But we should act today on this very straightforward piece of legislation to at least demonstrate to the public that we are up to the job.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah) [4.45 pm]: I rise to contribute to the Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2013 introduced by the opposition spokesperson, the member for Collie–Preston. I am a bit disappointed that there are not more members in this place this afternoon to debate what I think is a very serious concern in our community.

Mr M.P. Murray: Call a quorum!

Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Roger Cook; Mr David Templeman; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr John McGrath; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Mick Murray

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I might do that.

I remember once in teachers' college doing an assignment on the history of prohibition. I do not think I scored a very good result.

Mr T.K. Waldron: Which teachers' college?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Claremont Teachers' College; a fine teachers' college.

Part of its scope was to look at the history of how alcohol as a drug has been regulated and deregulated et cetera. It is interesting to watch how different countries and different cultures have moved to deal with the regulation of alcohol, alcohol consumption and the education behind alcohol. Some cultures do not partake in alcohol at all. Various examples of governments over the years have moved to try to address the social and financial impacts that the abuse of alcohol can have on communities. In the past five years or so the United Kingdom has introduced a raft of legislative measures to try to address the emerging major problem of binge drinking. When visiting a place like London, and even small villages and larger towns, we see that the culture of drinking is almost innate as those communities develop. When I first went to London in 1996—I was much younger then of course!—one of the great challenges was to see how many of those wonderfully named ale and beer establishments one could visit—places such as The Slug and Hare, The Dirty Dog and The White Horse. I think in some respects Australia, since colonisation, has had its issues with alcohol, including the Rum Rebellion back in 1789, or whenever it was. Issues associated with alcohol have been prevalent throughout our colonial history to the present day. Unfortunately, many hundreds of thousands of families over many years have sad tales of alcohol abuse that has had a profound impact on children and young people, and on partners and wives. It is true that with greater awareness—the emphasis on domestic violence for example—the link between alcohol and alcohol abuse and the prevalence of domestic violence is a very raw and sobering statistic. The statistics for my region are also very raw and sobering. Unfortunately, the domestic violence statistics in the Peel region are catastrophic, and I mean catastrophic. Allambee Counselling services in Mandurah provided me with statistics earlier in the year, before the election, that showed that—I am not proud of this at all—of all the nine regions, the Peel region accounts for nearly half of all reported domestic violence in Western Australia. That is an indictment on the community. I could not believe the statistic when I first saw it. Yet until now, government has been reluctant to fund additional services for counselling children who witness domestic violence.

Interestingly, the days of pubs and clubs being the primary places to enjoy alcohol has rapidly changed. I think that is an indication of people's financial circumstances. Indeed, I think in the hotel industry the volume of alcohol consumed on premises has declined. I know that for many years, the amount of alcohol sold at the Liquorland store in the Mandurah Forum was larger than that sold in any other place in Western Australia. I grew up in Northam, and when I left there in 1982 I think the population was around 6 000. I was and still am astounded that with that population it supported about 12 licensed premises from the old Northam Workers' Club in Fitzgerald Street to the Grand Hotel; the Club Hotel; the Northam Hotel —

Mr J.E. McGrath: The Shamrock.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: — the Shamrock Hotel; the Northam Country Club; the Trans Hotel, which has burnt down; the Tatts Hotel; and the Commercial Hotel. They were almost all in Fitzgerald Street. I have always been amazed that a town with a population of 6 000 to 7 000—admittedly, it caters to a hinterland—which has not changed dramatically over the years, supports a dozen licensed premises. Fast-forward to Mandurah with a population of 80 000, which has fewer than a dozen licensed premises. In my electorate are the Madora Bay Tavern, the very famous Silver Sands Tavern, the Peninsula Hotel on the point, which is still a licensed premises, and the Boathouse Tavern in town. Out further in Halls Head are the Peel Alehouse, as it is now known, and Cobblers Tavern, which is being rebuilt and I understand will be opened just before Christmas. Further down the line is the Bouvard Tavern. I have always been amazed that with that population, there are not more licensed premises. The reality is that alcohol in my region features as a cause of domestic violence and is one of the key reasons many people inflict pain and suffering on loved ones, including children. It is a sobering statistic. I do not mean that as a pun. It is very sobering to think that so many people in my community are part of that statistic.

That brings me to the issue of the Australian psyche. I honestly believe that a large proportion of the Australian population has a problem with alcohol. I have not travelled as widely as some members in this place, but it always interests me when someone comes back from another country and I ask them what it is like in Italy, for example. The member for Warnbro has been there. When people go out in Italy or somewhere else, how do young people behave when alcohol is in the equation? I do not know whether it is all purely cultural. I am not best placed to say this but people tell me that in some cultures, like the Italian culture, alcohol—wine in particular—is part of the culture, but it comes down to when it is consumed, how it is introduced to children and how they see it consumed et cetera, which can influence the value placed on alcohol. When I went to Scotland, I

Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Roger Cook; Mr David Templeman; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr John McGrath; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Mick Murray

always remember going to a pub in Drumnadrochit near Loch Ness, which the Loch Ness monster supposedly inhabits, and being amazed when I went up to the bar and saw these old Scotsmen sitting there with their beer and whisky chaser. Sometimes in words that I could not quite understand, they would invite me to imbibe with them. I would be interested in other members' comments on this cultural aspect. I honestly believe that, unfortunately, a significant number of Australians have difficulties with alcohol and alcohol abuse and that we need to do things to address this. One of the ways we can address this is in the spirit of the bill that the member for Collie–Preston has introduced in this place; that is, by fundamentally putting the responsibility back onto parents and people who are legal guardians of others.

During the debate on out-of-control parties in this place in the last Parliament, there was a lot of talk about the reasons we see more out-of-control parties or why we have gatherings like that. Partly, it is because a lot of events are now held in private homes, with fewer events held in formal licensed premises. A cost factor impedes a lot of people from organising an eighteenth or twenty-first birthday party in a hotel or licensed premises so they sometimes choose to celebrate in a private home. Over the past four years I have been corresponding intermittently with a lady named Naomi Oakley, a former senior policewoman in Victoria who established Safe Partying Australia. Admittedly, Naomi has a security business and she now basically provides party security in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

Ms L.L. Baker interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: She is effectively. Because of her expertise, she and her team are hired by people who fly her in. If someone wishes to hold a party, she puts them through a template process, which is all focused on responsible service of alcohol, checking people coming in and being well aware of the safety aspects of the venue. An assessment is done of the venue. It can be very complex, depending upon the size of the party, the number of young people expected to attend, the public transport implications for the venue or the site and the like. Naomi is very strongly of the view that a lot of the issues regarding the serving of alcohol to young people in particular can and indeed should be controlled at source—that is, by responsible parents and parents being well aware of the implications of social media and the threats to any gathering potentially getting out of control.

In this state we have heard on many occasions of parties that innocently, I think, get out of control. Mum and dad may have had a daughter or a son who was turning 18, or sometimes even 16, or 21 years of age. They have a party at home and do the right thing. They inform the police that the party is going to happen, but very little other preparation is done. The party gets out of hand and a massive police presence is required to disperse crowds. Bottles are thrown and violence occurs. There are clashes with police, and problems with neighbours, or people disturbing neighbours, including damaging property et cetera. Naomi Oakley believes that good planning and good, clear guidelines can help mitigate such events.

The question that this raises is: how do we deal with the introduction of alcohol into a family? I thought the member for Midland made some very pertinent comments in her contribution earlier this afternoon when she talked about parents' responsibility when they make decisions to effectively introduce alcohol to their kids. I have four young kids—they are six years of age and under. I have not even thought about it now. But my wife and I enjoy a wine every now and then; I like a Matso's beer from Broome every now and then. I must admit that I have started to think about what they see. I know that some of the government advertising has been focusing on this issue of what little kids see in terms of learnt behaviour from their parents. They are the advertisements that we have seen on television in which the father keeps on saying to the son, "Get us another one, will you, son?" and the son goes to the refrigerator and gets another beer for his dad. The implications and the learning elements of that are all explored, I suppose, and the underlying message is, I think, pretty clear.

I think what we are doing in this amendment bill goes some way towards addressing the issues and the problems that we face with alcohol. This bill puts in place responsibility of the secondary supplier and mechanisms by which to make sure that there is responsibility and that there are results of that responsibility. One of the clauses also, I think, addresses juveniles on unlicensed premises.

I do not want to be seen as the modern-day temperance movement advocate at all, but I think we need to face up to the fact that we have a major problem in Australia. I do not know whether it is cultural. I do not know what the answer is or how it has come about, but it is a problem, and this bill that the member for Collie–Preston has introduced should be supported by members on all sides of the Parliament so that we can begin to address a serious problem in Australia's psyche.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [5.04 pm]: I also rise to talk about the private member's Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2013 moved by the member for Collie–Preston. Speakers before me have articulated the issue and the problems that alcohol can cause in our society. The whole purpose of this bill moved and presented by the member for Collie–Preston really centres on the issue of the secondary supply of alcohol to children under the age of 18 years. By "secondary supply" I mean adults supplying alcohol to children under 18. As we very

well know, the law prevents the selling of alcohol to people under the age of 18 but, of course, that does not mean that people under the age of 18 do not drink alcohol. The consumption of alcohol in a domestic situation seems to be becoming more prevalent. This legislation therefore seeks to bring the force of law into a domestic situation, although the domestic situation does not have to be in a home but could be at a party in a park. One of the reasons this legislation is being debated today is the concern expressed by some members of the public and parents that children are being given alcohol by adults in a house. That presents its own problem that I will talk about shortly.

The member for Mandurah talked about his experiences in England and the drinking culture there. During my time in England I worked in the west end of London in a pub called the Tom Cribb. I was amazed by the volume of alcohol that was consumed on a daily basis by people who came into that pub. It was phenomenal to find that business people would come into the pub in their hour lunchbreak and consume three to four pints of beer. At the end of the working day, they would come back in and consume another two or three pints. Then they would get the tube home, have some dinner and then go to their local and consume some more pints. That was happening on a daily basis.

I also come to this debate from my own cultural upbringing in a largely Italian home where alcohol had a different significance from the significance imported from the United Kingdom. The member for Swan Hills may be able to identify with this. In many Italian families, and I was in one, our parents would allow us to consume some alcohol underage, but it was done in a very controlled way when very little was consumed and it was always consumed in a social setting and with a meal. I therefore grew up not seeing alcohol as this mystical, magical product. So when I turned 14, 15, 16 or 17 years of age, I did not want to go out and indulge in binge drinking because it was not a magical substance to me. I am mindful of not trying to encourage parents to give their children alcohol at a young age, because I know that studies have been done that state that any amount of alcohol given to children can have an effect on the brain. So I am not encouraging that. All I am saying, though, from my own personal experience in the Italian cultural way is that alcohol did not hold this magical attraction to me. I actually remember going to parties when I was 17 or 18 years old and I would end up being the skipper because I was the one who would drink the least as it just was not magical. However, I want to place on record that the scientific evidence now would not support under-age drinking of any amount. But it must be said that we have to be careful that it does not create this substance that holds a magical appeal to people, especially to young people, and that they do not engage in binge drinking.

The culture of alcohol consumption in Australia was inherited from the Anglo–Celtic culture; one could almost say Anglo–Celtic baggage. Alcohol was a very important substance in the United Kingdom, Ireland and Western Europe. It was often used for medicinal purposes and that culture was imported into Australia. The practice of shouting was also imported, and people would shout a round, and then the obligation would be for the next person in that group to shout a round, so that by the end of the night people could have consumed many beers. That would depend, of course, on whether your friends wanted to hand over money and had participated in the shout, which would be noted later on in the evening! That practice also encouraged heavy drinking. In the early days in the outback, the culture was to work hard and drink hard, which added to this culture of heavy drinking. This culture has been replicated in football clubs with mad Mondays, which I am sure the Minister for Sport and Recreation knows all about. After the end of the season, players go out on mad Monday events, with much consumption of alcohol.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): Members, the conversations are getting too loud and I ask you to quieten down as much as you can.

Dr A.D. BUTI: In Australia, alcohol is central to our culture. It is also central to the Mediterranean culture, but from my understanding, and on the evidence, binge drinking is not as prevalent in the Mediterranean culture as it is in the Anglo–Celtic culture, although that is not the genesis of the debate before us.

The issue of under-age drinking and alcohol being served to young people is a worry. Many Australian states have enacted laws to control the secondary supply of alcohol; Western Australia has not, which is the reason the member for Collie–Preston has presented this legislation to us. New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria and the Northern Territory have legislation in place to control the secondary supply of alcohol, and generally it is unlawful to supply alcohol to people under the age of 18 years if it is not served by the parent or guardian and there is not a responsible supervisor of that alcohol consumption. We also need to look very carefully when we try to bring in laws to regulate the secondary supply of alcohol to people under 18 years of age. We need to look beyond any legislation to control the culture that has developed and to consider the advertising of alcohol. People cannot watch a game of Australian Rules Football or National Rugby League on television—I have not done the math—without 50 per cent of the ads being filled up with alcohol ads, but particularly beer ads. They are fantastic ads. They are probably some of the best ads we see on TV. That in itself is a real danger, because this can promote alcohol consumption. When people sit down to watch the football with

Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Roger Cook; Mr David Templeman; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr John McGrath; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Mick Murray

their kids, they see these beer ads. It is a real shame that 50 per cent of the ads are for beer and 25 to 30 per cent for gambling. I do not know whether those percentages are correct, but Australia is probably the only country in the world, when it comes to watching major sport on free-to-air television, where 50 to 80 per cent of the commercials are for alcohol and gambling.

Mr J.E. McGrath: Fast food.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Then the other 20 per cent is made up of fast-food commercials; it is all there! What an unhealthy existence to be associated with sport! The irony of it all! I would hope the Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2013, brought in by the member for Collie–Preston, will act as a catalyst for the curbing of advertising of alcohol at certain times and events, and also gambling and maybe even fast food. Of course, the libertarians on the other side will talk about the nanny state, which is so easy to do, but the health consequences of not doing something means that we will all pay. Day in, day out in this house we debate the AAA credit rating or governments not supplying enough doctors or not having enough beds in a hospital. But if we look seriously at alcohol, gambling and fast food, maybe governments would not have to worry so much about how many beds there are in a hospital and how much money is spent on the health budget and traffic accidents et cetera. I know that the Minister for Sport and Recreation has talked about this at times, and it is not a far-fetched suggestion. If we go back in history, banning cigarette advertising on television was once criticised and shouted down. It will be a long process. I am not a wowsler, but I do believe —

Mr J.E. McGrath: You're getting close!

Dr A.D. BUTI: What was that, member for South Perth?

Mr J.E. McGrath: You're getting close!

Dr A.D. BUTI: I like to enjoy alcohol in the right environment, but I do not see why an AFL game needs to be flooded with advertisement after advertisement from different brewery companies and ad after ad about gambling. To me, that is not being a wowsler; a wowsler is someone who does not enjoy life. I think the consequences of too much gambling and drinking et cetera mean that those people might think they are enjoying life, but their families would not be. The member for Mandurah talked about domestic violence; the number one contributing factor to domestic violence is alcohol. How could we as a Parliament argue that it is not important to look at the factors that contribute to a crime? I think domestic violence is the only serious crime that has continually increased over time; I am not sure if that is correct, but from my research about a year ago that was the situation. How could we not look at the consequences of too much alcohol consumption in our culture? It is just absurd that the national pastime, in sporting terms in Western Australia at least, is AFL, and there are these ads on TV after every goal is scored. Of course, if it was the West Coast Eagles playing, there probably would not have been many ads this year because there were not many goals! But, seriously, I think this bill should be supported. On its own it will not suffice, but it is an important step. The argument against supporting this legislation should not be that other things need to be done; other things always need to be done, but we have to start somewhere.

It is significant that the member for Collie–Preston introduced this bill not only because it is his portfolio area, but also because he comes from Collie—the town of my birth—and country towns have a strong history of associating alcohol with social environments. We should do anything we can to try to reduce that. This piece of legislation is a simple method of seeking to curb the consumption of alcohol by juveniles while they are in the care of responsible parents. As a parent of an 18-year-old son, I can say that if he goes to a party I would like to know that the host parent may face some legal consequences if they do not have a responsible environment. There should be some consequences. Law is not the answer to everything, but in this situation I think the legislation will have a significant contribution to make, if not in alleviating the problem, at least in sending the right message. The message is that this Parliament does recognise there is a problem in regard to the secondary supply of alcohol and it has introduced legislation that will go some way to try to address that situation.

There is always a problem in law when it seeks to regulate a private situation. The history of law has always had a delineation between the private and the public. Lawmakers have historically engaged in legislation to deal with public environments and transactions, and when it came to the home the law was generally silent. That is why it has taken many, many years for domestic violence to be taken seriously by politicians and by the police force. It was not that many years ago that rape by a husband against his wife was not a crime in the United Kingdom and even in Australia. It was not that long ago that a judge in South Australia basically said that a man could engage in non-consensual sex with his wife. This comes to this history of the law staying out of the private sphere and therefore the home. One could argue that this piece of legislation seeks to intrude in the home, but of course in introducing this legislation the member for Collie–Preston is not addressing the situation of a parent giving alcohol to their child. In most states, the law is that a parent can give alcohol to their child, but it has to be done responsibly. The member for Collie–Preston is looking at the situation of friends or other people coming to the

house. It is not a completely private situation; the family or that house has invited members of the public—they are friends, but they are still members of the public—and the member for Collie–Preston is seeking to regulate that situation. As I said, we have regulation in Tasmania, the Northern Territory, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, and I cannot see any reason that the Parliament of Western Australia would not support this legislation. I sincerely hope that the government will not block this piece of legislation purely because it has been introduced by the member for Collie–Preston, a member of the opposition, because I am sure that many members on the government side would agree with the intent of this legislation and with the actual legislation itself. It is not radical legislation; it does not seek to do more than have some influence in trying to reduce the secondary supply of alcohol to under-age people. One may have a review or one may have an inquiry, but we do not need an inquiry or a review to know that adults giving alcohol to children or under-age people in an irresponsible manner is bad. We do not need an inquiry about that; we know it is bad. There is no reason I can surmise that the government would not support this legislation. It will send a fantastic message to the public and parents of Western Australia that this Parliament is serious about trying to curb the secondary supply of alcohol to juveniles.

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands) [5.24 pm]: This is an issue I am very concerned about and I am delighted that the member for Collie–Preston has stepped forward and put up this important Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2013, which, as we have heard, addresses the secondary supply of alcohol to young people. I am very glad that the minister is in this place to listen to these discussions and the contributions from all of us. I sincerely doubt that there is anybody in this chamber lacking the intelligence, or emotional intelligence at least, to understand that children in this state are suffering from the impact of alcohol. I have some research that I want to refer to to start my presentation, because this debate should be evidence based. We cannot continue to guess these things; we must have evidence and research. This research is by the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth. It was contracted out to Painted Dog Research. This research was released in November last year. I want to read to members a couple of the questions and answers from this research. Anyone who is interested in the methodology and the veracity, reliability and validity of this research is more than welcome to consult the relevant reference to assure themselves that, statistically, this information is foolproof.

One of the questions that was asked of nearly 2 000 people was, “How concerned are you about alcohol use among young people in Western Australia?” Seventy per cent of men agreed that they are between slightly and extremely concerned, with 40 per cent saying they are extremely concerned; and 85 per cent of women said that they are concerned, with 49 per cent saying they are extremely concerned.

Another question was, “How concerned are you about alcohol-related violence in WA?” Of the people surveyed in this statistically reliable survey, 98 per cent said that they are between slightly moderately and extremely concerned; in fact, 65 per cent of that total said that they are extremely concerned.

It is important to point out some of the evidence that is available now, because it is easy to dismiss this kind of bill as being nanny state and trying to control people’s private lives. But the community is changing and attitudes are changing, and I will talk a bit about that in a moment.

Another question was, “The WA Cricket Association has announced that, like Perth Glory and Perth Wildcats, it will now be sponsored by Healthway to promote healthy messages, instead of sponsors that promote alcohol and junk food. To what extent do you support or oppose that decision?” The survey showed that there is outstanding support for the decision that those agencies have made to come online with Healthway’s new direction.

We have heard mention that Healthway was the ground-breaking organisation that set global standards for the control of tobacco when that legislation was first put through. Unfortunately, one of the key levers that we were able to use when Healthway was established originally was state taxation and levies on tobacco. Those levies were removed in the 1990s. There is a federal tax on tobacco, and state levies were also being paid. We were able to use those state levies to establish Healthway and to fund the incredible work that it does, and part of that money was kept by government to enable it to continue its research into health. But we do not have that lever in the alcohol industry, so we need to look at doing other things.

Another question from this same piece of research that was done just under one year ago was, “To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose the introduction of laws to prevent the supply of alcohol to minors without parental permission?” I would encourage the minister to look at this research, because it shows that 88 per cent of the total sample said that they are strongly supportive of that. So there is no argument for not passing this amendment bill based on a lack of community support for it. An interesting point is that that was the total sample figure. If we look in that sample just at the number of people who have children currently attending school, we can see that 91 per cent said it was extremely important and they would support laws on the secondary supply of alcohol.

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 30 October 2013]

p5676b-5697a

Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Roger Cook; Mr David Templeman; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr John McGrath; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Mick Murray

That research is well worth looking at. However, we know that around three-quarters of Australians—around 72.6 per cent—drink below levels that are high risk. Most people drink sensibly. They do not make a habit of binge drinking or uncontrolled drinking. Most people are fine when it comes to their consumption of alcohol. However, short-term consumption of alcohol at harmful levels, even if it is only occasionally, is also a big feature of Australia’s drinking culture. The statistics say that one in five Australians—that is, 20.4 per cent—drink at short-term risky or high-risk levels at least once a month. To put it another way, that equates to more than 42 million occasions of binge drinking in Australia every year. We know that the overall levels of alcohol consumption and drinking patterns have not changed markedly over the past decade, but there has been a lowering of the age at which children start drinking and a shift in the type of drinking, with the emergence of the “pre-loading” and binge drinking attitude, particularly in children. Alcohol consumption accounts for 3.2 per cent of the total burden of disease and injury in Australia: 4.9 per cent in males and 1.6 per cent in females. Beyond that impact, it also has a massive impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities because the harmful consumption of alcohol, as we have heard, impacts on workforce productivity, health care, hospital use, ambulances, road accidents, law enforcement, property damage and insurance administration.

Just for the record of *Hansard*, the source of the information I am referring to is from a document released by the federal government’s Preventative Health Taskforce titled “Australia: the healthiest country by 2020”, the third technical report of which has the subheading “Preventing alcohol-related harm in Australia: a window of opportunity”. I will refer to some of the information in this booklet to record for *Hansard* some of the reasons why this legislation is particularly essential. Alcohol is causally linked to more than 60 different medical conditions in our country and is linked to 3 430 deaths a year and 85 435 disability-adjusted life years; the statistic is adjusted to take account of that. In the 10 years between 1992 and 2001, more than 31 000 Australians died from alcohol-attributed injury and disease. A greater number died from acute intoxication than chronic conditions. The point to note is that deaths from acute alcohol intoxication are most prevalent amongst people between the ages of 15 and 29. That is abhorrent; that is absolutely unacceptable in this society. The statistics show that alcohol abuse contributed to 918 deaths, including 553 suicides and self-inflicted injuries related to alcohol and 396 road traffic accidents. These are horrific, alarming statistics that underline the need for this legislation. Drinking contributes to the three leading causes of death among adolescents: unintentional injury, homicide and suicide, along with risk-taking behaviour, unsafe sex choices, sexual coercion and alcohol overdose.

In common with adolescents, we can say that young children are at the greatest risk because they tend to be big risk-takers and their decision-making skills are sometimes not developed enough to make the right choices in these circumstances. Alcohol affects brain development, and it is really important to know that one’s brain is not fully developed until the age of 25. Every bit of alcohol that one puts in one’s system up to the age of 25 impacts upon one’s brain development. That, again, is a pretty alarming statistic when we correlate it with the incidence of binge drinking amongst 15 to 29-year-olds, and the acute health crises being created by alcohol abuse.

Members will have heard me speak before about the work I was privileged to have completed in the Education and Health Standing Committee and the 2011 report titled “Alcohol: Reducing the Harm and Curbing the Culture of Excess”. That report contains all the evidence one needs to understand why it is so important to have this kind of secondary supply legislation in place. Affordability, availability and accessibility are the three As of alcohol abuse. The reasons people abuse alcohol or subject themselves to its ill effects can be attributed to excesses in those three areas.

Let us talk about advertising to start with. I refer to the “Alcohol Advertising Review Board: Annual Report 2012–13”, which lists the “Top 10 Alcohol Advertising Shockers of 2012–13”. One that I want to mention is a liquor advertisement for “Berri Estates 5 Litre Wine Casks—3 for \$30 sold by Woolworths Liquor”. The annual report describes the advertisement as —

Promotion for Berri Estates 5 Litre Casks by Woolworths Limited, offering three Berri Estates 5 Litre Casks for \$30.

That is unbelievable!

Mr J.E. McGrath: I bought three bottles of wine the other day for \$30; I thought it was a bargain.

Ms L.L. BAKER: That is unbelievable! The price is a very important part of this issue, particularly for young people. The complaint against that particular promotion was upheld in the determination. It was proven to have —

Contravened section (3)(a)(i) as the advertisement was not prepared with a sense of responsibility to society;

Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Roger Cook; Mr David Templeman; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr John McGrath; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Mick Murray

Another example is Skinnygirl Cocktails. The complaint was —

Name and packaging of Skinnygirl Cocktails would have strong appeal to young people and is associated with youth through the name ‘Skinnygirl’ and the image used on the package. In addition, the name ‘Skinnygirl’ suggests that consuming the product will help you be skinny.

That complaint was upheld. That is outrageous abuse of marketing to adolescents. It also contravened sections of the act and —

... the Panel believed the name and packing of the product would have strong appeal to young people and the term ‘skinny’ could be viewed as suggesting you will not gain weight when consuming the product.

I want to specifically talk about the advertisement under “Exposure to young people”. I am probably one of the worst offenders because I have a Budweiser ad from America that I use when I give presentations. It makes me cry when I see it because it is just beautiful. It is a Budweiser ad. I am sorry but I cannot help that it is a Budweiser ad, but it does its adverts brilliantly and is very clever about its markets and its products. A complaint was made about a Budweiser ad seen on a public telephone box outside Living Waters Lutheran College in Warnbro —

This was the fourth time an alcohol advertisement had been placed on the same telephone box in a 20 month period.

...

Concerned about the placement of an alcohol advertisement outside a school, as children and young people would be exposed to it. The complainant noted:

“I am concerned about this advertising of alcohol outside the school as it always promotes alcohol as a ‘fun’ product. All through our curriculum we try to educate students on the risks, both mentally and physically, alcohol as a drug can have on people. These sorts of ads work against what we are trying to say. They are unnecessary and I believe even detrimental to my students and the community at large. Parents are not being given the choice re their children’s exposure to such advertising ...

That complaint—thank goodness—was also upheld.

I have heard my colleagues talk about Mediterranean drinking patterns and different drinking cultures and styles. I point out that all the evidence, including evidence to be presented tomorrow morning when we go to the breakfast hosted by Hon Graham Jacobs with Sir Ian —

Mr P. Abetz: Professor Ian Gilmore.

Ms L.L. BAKER: The breakfast is with Professor Ian Gilmore, who is a UK leading exponent on the issues to do with alcohol and youth. It is very clear that advertising has a strong impact on children and young people in our society.

In my last five minutes I want to give the minister a kick. I hope I plant it fairly and squarely where it will make an impact. The stakeholders with whom I have affiliations are scratching their heads about why the Liquor Control Act review has not yet been completed. It was announced back in March. Submissions were accepted, they closed and a document was meant to be released in, I think, June or July. That was postponed and then it was to be released in October and now it has been postponed again. That is not good enough. People are waiting to see the outcome. I can only hope that when the minister stands to make his announcement to the house, he will say that part of the review includes secondary supply laws. I sincerely hope that our bill and the review of the Liquor Control Act that the minister has been involved in point to the urgent need to have this kind of secondary supply legislation in place.

The culture of drinking in Australia is very different from the culture of drinking in other countries. I am sure that the professor we are having breakfast with in the morning will point to the fact that it is now changing in Mediterranean countries.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): The conversation is getting a bit loud. Can members bring it down a notch, please.

Ms L.L. BAKER: French children say “le binge”. Binge drinking is now part of European societies. Whatever happened to keep people safe in that environment and the wonderful acceptance and slow introduction of alcohol in a manageable way are going. It is no longer the state of affairs in those countries. They are not immune to this. We may look to what was and think admirably that it was great, but it has very much changed.

So, minister, where is the review of the Liquor Control Act? Many people are waiting to see it. One of the huge crises that I have to deal with in my electorate is from the many constituents who come to me with complaints about the big destination liquor outlets. The minister will remember that we fought Coles and stopped it building a 1 000 square metre liquor barn in the Maylands precinct. We are just about to go back to the Liquor Commission to fight another application, but this one is by Woolworths—the \$30 for five litres company. These kinds of destination liquor outlets are a real problem for the commissioner. As the minister knows, it is very difficult to balance them with the current objects in the act. They are all given equal weight. That is completely unacceptable. I understand the need to invest in tourism and entertainment, but not to the detriment of the health of our country, our children and our people. That is not a balance that I am prepared to strike. The weighting given to the objects in the act must go more towards protecting the social fabric of our community, not allowing this great proliferation of clustered bottle shops. In my electorate, there are 16 liquor outlets within one kilometre. That is why the 1 000 square metre liquor outlet that Coles wanted to build was not welcome. That is why the 945 square metre one that Woolworths is trying to build is not welcome. We have a very high incidence of street drinking and antisocial behaviour. It is seasonal; however, it is there. These are very vulnerable people who are trying to cope, and they are constantly being given big deals with the lowest price guarantee. That is not acceptable in our community. It is about time the minister released the review of the Liquor Control Act so that we can, hopefully, start to plan a more sensible way of managing the abuse of alcohol in our community and everyone can have a drink, enjoy themselves and take part in entertainment but not suffer the negative consequences that we are currently seeing.

MR T.K. WALDRON (Wagin — Minister for Racing and Gaming) [5.43 pm]: I thank members opposite. It has been really interesting for me as the minister to listen to a lot of the comments that have been made this afternoon. Some really good points have been made about the Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2013, but many broader points were made about alcohol generally. I welcome that. Obviously, the issue of secondary supply has been around for some time. It was advocated in this place by the previous member for Alfred Cove, who talked about this quite often. I agreed with her in this place back then that there may well be a place for secondary supply legislation. I agreed that it may be a deterrent and that it should be considered.

The liquor review was referred to. I will talk about the timing of that in a moment. The announcement of a review of the Liquor Control Act reactivated the secondary supply debate, which is a good thing. A lady called Samantha Menezes, who has already been mentioned this afternoon, submitted a petition about the secondary supply of alcohol. I met with Samantha earlier this year. I listened to her concerns about alcohol and young people, and her desire to see secondary supply legislation introduced. It was a really good meeting. We had a good exchange of views and ideas. There is no doubt that she is a good person and a very caring lady. I welcome her comments whenever.

I recognise that there is community concern about this issue. I have stated on a number of occasions that the government would be supportive of any initiatives leading to less harm to children and less exposure to alcohol when growing up. Properly considered legislation may well prove to be a deterrent. This is a really important point that I want members to listen to: that is why the government specifically included the issue of secondary supply in the terms of reference for the review of the Liquor Control Act. It is in the terms of reference because we want it to be properly considered. It would be irresponsible of me to pre-empt the review when the committee has been asked to look at this complex issue. A lot of people think it is simple—it is not; it is very complex.

Several members interjected.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I let everyone speak without interjection. I did not interject on members the whole afternoon. I let everyone speak. I gave everyone a full go. I would like the opportunity to speak.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): I will protect you, minister.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: It would be irresponsible to pre-empt the review when the committee has been asked specifically to look at this complex issue and make recommendations based on evidence gathered from other Australian jurisdictions and overseas. Members have mentioned that there are secondary supply laws in other states. I want the committee to look at those laws to see the positives and any negatives. That is what it has been doing. I am on the record as supporting the philosophy behind secondary supply controls. However, I make it clear that I am absolutely committed to ensuring that any legislation put forward is, firstly, effective, and, secondly, does not create any unforeseen negative outcomes. The potential negative outcomes really concern me. That is one of the reasons I want the review to look at those issues.

In terms of possible negative consequences, we do not want to over-regulate to the extent that responsible adults regard the risk of hosting an event to be too high and our young people are forced out of their homes into unsupervised environments such as parks and beaches. I do not want it to get to that. I am also really keen to avoid situations in which an adult hosting a function where juveniles are in attendance—even though they have

done as much as they possibly can to prevent an under-age person consuming alcohol, a juvenile sneaks alcohol into the event or is provided with alcohol by one of his or her mates—is considered liable and charged. I do not want that to happen. I want to make sure that if we introduce laws, it is done properly. I would not consider that to be a very positive outcome at all.

Members opposite are right: secondary supply legislation has been introduced in other jurisdictions. New South Wales and Victoria have similar legislation that prohibits a person from supplying alcohol to a juvenile on private premises unless the person is the parent or guardian of the juvenile, or has the express consent of the parent or guardian of the juvenile to do so. It is different in Queensland and the Northern Territory. They have very different legislation from New South Wales and Victoria. Their legislation prohibits the supply of alcohol to a juvenile on private premises unless the alcohol is supplied by the parent or guardian of the juvenile, or by a person who is exercising the responsibilities of the parent or guardian of that juvenile. It does not necessarily include the host of a party; it is different legislation. Furthermore, the Queensland and Northern Territory provisions stipulate that the parent or guardian who supplies alcohol to a juvenile must act responsibly in the supply of the alcohol. This aspect is not present in the New South Wales or Victorian legislation. In Queensland and the Northern Territory the focus is on the responsible supply of alcohol by the parents or guardians and there is no provision for parental consent. Parental consent can be provided to another adult, as applies in Victoria and New South Wales.

I have no problem with the intent of the amendments proposed by the opposition. I understand them, but the amendment is a direct copy of the New South Wales legislation. It does not include any aspect of responsible supply, and that is why I want the review committee to study it. We need to get the right advice before we rush in and do something that does not achieve what we are trying to do. The bill does nothing to address the concerns I have expressed about the possible consequences of over-regulation. In addition, the New South Wales legislation has been criticised by health groups as being ineffective in protecting young people from alcohol harm. I have heard people speak passionately tonight about wanting to protect people, yet health groups say it will not do that.

I am sure the member's intention is fine, and I congratulate him for that, but it is no good having good intentions if we cannot deliver them. I do not want to be part of that; I want to make sure we deliver, otherwise we are wasting our time. There is also a view that the response to contraventions of secondary supply legislation should be more aligned with education than punishment. That is something I think we need to consider. I am not saying it is right, but it has not been considered with this bill. There is a range of responses to secondary supply legislation from around Australia and a host of views about what is effective and what is not. I do not claim to be an expert in this field and I do not think the member for Collie–Preston claims to be an expert in the field. The interesting thing is that the member for Collie–Preston and I both have four daughters, who we have raised and gone through this with, so we both have practical knowledge from our own history, but we do not have expert knowledge. If I am making decisions that will affect people —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): If members are going to have conversations, I will have to ask them to leave. They are getting a bit loud. Thank you.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: The Parliament must be responsible. If we are going to make decisions that will affect people across the state, we want to be sure that we get them right. I do not believe that this bill is right. As I said to the former member for Alfred Cove, we need to consider this thoroughly and if we bring in legislation, we need to make sure that it is good legislation.

There has been some criticism about the review committee being late to report. It will report in November this year.

Mr R.H. Cook: Can you guarantee that?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: One of the reasons the review committee has asked for more time is that many of the people and groups making submissions have asked the committee for more time to lodge their submissions. The committee granted the extensions because we want to do the damn thing properly. We do not want to rush it and find in two years that we have not covered it properly. I have consented to those extensions because I think it is important we do the job properly.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: In November. Hopefully, it is only two or three weeks away. It is almost completed. The executive officer got sick so we lost a couple of weeks. We could not do much about that. I have not pressured the committee—members can criticise me for that, and I will take that criticism—because I want it to do the review properly. I know the amount of work it has done; it has done heaps of work on this. It is really important.

Mr J.E. McGrath: When the review committee hands down its finding, will you make that public or will you take it away to decide with cabinet what you will do?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: It will be made public. I will go back to all the industry groups et cetera and discuss the recommendations before I make recommendations to government because I want to let them have their feedback on the review. I would be silly if I did not do that. I want to consult with all those groups and give them the opportunity to comment. We have to consider the recommendations responsibly.

The review committee is now due to report in November. It is the view of government and a strong view of mine that we should await that considered advice and recommendations. I am not knocking what the member for Collie–Preston has tried to do; his intentions with this bill are fine. I have said all along that I have no problem with the possibility of bringing in secondary supply legislation. However, as I have just said, with the review committee due to hand down its recommendations in November, it would be foolish of the Parliament and irresponsible of me as minister to rush through a bill that has some holes in it, even though its intentions are good.

Comments have been made about the liquor stores. I do not want to get into that but we should remember that this review is about that as well. The original legislation was introduced by the Leader of the Opposition when the Labor Party was in government. Things change over time. I have no doubt that its intentions were good; I am not criticising it. But things change and we need to have another look at it, as the government did back then, which was responsible.

I have outlined the reason we will not be supporting this bill. I have doubts about the bill. People have been saying that it is urgent and we should get it done. With all due respect to the member for Collie–Preston, this bill was introduced in June and we are just debating it now, so I do not think it was really that urgent.

Mr M.P. Murray: What have you been doing? Don't worry about what I've been doing.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: If it was really that urgent, it would have been debated straightaway. I did not think the member thought it was that urgent. The review is coming down and I will act responsibly on the recommendations of the review. Although we understand its intent, we will not be supporting the bill.

Ms M.M. Quirk: I am curious to know who is conducting the review.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: John Atkins heads up the review.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Who is he?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: John headed up the ANZ Bank. He has been involved in business and sport. He is a leading community member. Nicole Roocke is involved. She is a lady, obviously.

Ms M.M. Quirk: She is the shandy component, is she?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Ian Stanley is a farmer from country WA who has been involved in the oil mallee industry. He is quite a leader in that industry. He is highly respected in his own community and across Australia. I have tried to get a balance of people.

Ms M.M. Quirk: This Nicole Roocke, other than her gender, what other qualifications does she bring to the review?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: She holds a high position in the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia. I have known of Nicole and have seen her work. She is a fine young woman.

MR J.E. McGRATH (South Perth — Parliamentary Secretary) [5.58 pm]: I rise to make a brief contribution to the Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2013 that was introduced by the member for Collie–Preston. I also congratulate the member for bringing this in because I think alcohol is an issue in society. It is a problem throughout Australia. I do not think this issue or many other steps that we might attempt to take to address the problems with alcohol will change things that much. That just happens to be the way our society is.

From my own experience, my father never encouraged me to drink. He was quite a heavy drinker but I was never offered alcohol at home. As a young bloke growing up, the boys would get together and have a beer after a game of footy or something like that but it was never encouraged at home. Similarly, I never encouraged my children to drink at home. I have a son and a daughter. My daughter probably drinks more than my son. There is no rule for whether young people will be drinkers or not. The concern I have is that I do not think we want to categorise all young people as being heavy drinkers and in danger of suffering harm through drinking too much. There are a lot of young people in my electorate, and I think they are pretty responsible young people. There will be exceptions to the rule, and I know that there are sections of society in which drinking among young people and binge drinking are huge issues.

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There is another thing about the legislation. If my son or daughter was going to a party at another person's place, I do not know whether I would really feel comfortable about giving permission to that person to give my son or daughter a drink if I was not there. I think that a lot of parents try to oversee those things when their kids are going to parties or when they know they are going somewhere. Just to sign off on or to give a letter of approval for a person whom I might not know —

Mr P. Papalia: At the moment they can give it without even asking.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Yes, I understand that, but I do not know that I would give that permission anyway. I would prefer that my son or daughter —

Mr P. Papalia: In that case your child wouldn't get any.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: No. I would prefer them maybe not to have it than to let them have it in a circumstance in which I had no control over it. We know that kids will drink when they get away from home. When they are out and about they might be tempted and they might drink, but I am not sure that a lot of parents would say to someone—they might even know the person—that it is okay for Mary or Johnny to have a few beers tonight when the parents will not even be there and do not know what will go on at the place. However, I think the legislation has good intentions, and I can see what the member for Collie–Preston has raised. Binge drinking is an issue among young people, but in my electorate I do not hear of wild rave parties at which extremely young people are drinking, and I would like to think that that is not the case.

I also want to mention quickly that the minister raised the review of the Liquor Control Act. I think the review will take up an enormous amount of time in this Parliament when the minister finally gets some legislation, because it is a subject that we are all concerned about. I believe that we will go well into next year once the minister consults with the various stakeholder groups after the report is handed down. I would like to see this legislation taken into consideration, as the minister mentioned it would be, because it could be part of a wide-sweeping overhaul of the liquor laws in our state. Having said that, I do not think our laws are that bad. The laws are there. People under 18 years of age cannot drink and they cannot buy alcohol. We know that some kids have been known to slip through the net and buy alcohol at a liquor store or a bottle shop, but most responsible people who work in those types of outlets, hotels and nightclubs will always seek to identify the proof of age of young people who go into those outlets. We have laws in place so that if people are underage, they should not get in. We have those proper restrictions.

As far as the advertising of alcohol goes, how are we going to stop it? It is a legal product. If there is to be any change to advertising, I believe it can be done only through the federal government anyway. I do not think our state government could do it. A lot of advertising could be seen as borderline. Some advertising encourages people to invest their money in all sorts of ventures. Not everyone feels the need when they see an ad to have a beer. I know that advertising can be quite subliminal, but are we going to prevent footballers from having a beer after they win the grand final? Are we going to stop the person who wins the Melbourne Cup from having champagne? People might say that subliminally that says to some young person, "When you have a big win you've got to have a beer to celebrate." Unfortunately, that is the Aussie way. I think a lot of people do enjoy a beer or a glass of wine but they are not necessarily involved in domestic violence or in drinking and driving.

Ms J. Farrer: How do you know?

Mr J.E. McGRATH: No, I said we cannot categorise them and say that they all will. Certainly some will, but a lot of people will not.

With the liquor review the minister will try to find out what the community is really saying about a lot of these things. People are saying now that we should raise the drinking age to 21 years. I could never support that. I think that when kids are 18 and want to have a drink, they should be able to have a drink. They can vote and they can be sent to war. They are adults the moment they turn 18. The drinking age was 21 when I was a young fellow, and young guys then were drinking when they were 17, so they were drinking four years underage.

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: No. What I am saying is that I do not think there is a lot of need for too much change in our liquor laws. There needs to be some finetuning, but young people know that they cannot have a drink until they are 18.

I heard Steve Mills on the radio the other day say that his son—I think it was—turned 18 and suddenly he was allowed to go to the casino. At midnight on the day before he turned 18, they all got dressed and went to the casino. At one minute past 12 the young bloke was allowed to enter the casino because he is an adult, and he would also have been allowed to have a beer. That family looked at the issue quite responsibly and said, "It would be fantastic if you want to have a beer when you're 18. You can have one, but we're not going to give you

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Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Roger Cook; Mr David Templeman; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr John McGrath; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Mick Murray

one before you turn 18.” He might have had one at home but he could at least then go to a licensed venue. I think a lot of responsible people say that they are never going to encourage their kids to drink if they are under 18. Sometimes their kids go out and find a drink, but who knows where they will find that alcohol?

I say to the member for Collie–Preston that the tenet of his bill has a lot of merit. I take on board what the minister has said. I think the minister supports where the member for Collie–Preston is going with the bill. However, I would like to think that I and other members can look at the recommendations from the review when they come in. I think it is accepted that there will be a penalty for any adult who breaks the trust of the parents of a juvenile at a party at their home by providing them with alcohol without the consent of a parent.

I think the member for Collie–Preston is on the right mark here, but I think we have to wait until the liquor review comes through. I will certainly be supporting the review and, hopefully, the minister will bring in some legislation along this line.

MR P. ABETZ (Southern River) [6.10 pm]: I rise to address the Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2013. When it comes to the issue of liquor and the damage that it does, at a very young age I saw firsthand the horror of what happens when young people drink excessively. I was the youngest in my class in a small primary school, Blackmans Bay Primary School. There were nine boys in my primary school class and we went through to high school together. Being born in December, I was the youngest in the class. In Tasmania, we got our driver’s licence at the age of 17. By the time I got my driver’s licence, two of those boys had killed themselves with drink-driving. I made up my mind that I did not need this stuff that had killed two of the kids I went to school with. I have softened a little, in that I do occasionally drink the toast at a wedding with a glass of champagne or have the occasional glass of wine with a meal.

I had the privilege of serving on the Education and Health Standing Committee, which produced the report “Alcohol: Reducing the Harm and Curbing the Culture of Excess” in 2011. I had the privilege of travelling overseas with that committee to look at alcohol and drug issues. One of the things that struck me when we were in Europe was the huge myth that seems to permeate our society that in European culture—Italy, France and so on—because kids learn to drink at a young age, they drink responsibly. That is absolute rubbish. France had the highest rate of alcoholism and cirrhosis of the liver of any country in Europe. The French recognise the seriousness of that problem and put very strict restrictions on advertising alcohol. I do not have time to go into the details of those restrictions, but, basically, advertisements are only allowed to provide technical information about the wine or whatever it is, and spirits are not allowed to be advertised at all. The French are very strict because they realise the damage that alcohol does. Because binge drinking is the norm in Australia, to some extent we think that is unique to Australia. We should not kid ourselves. I have just visited relatives in Germany, which has exactly the same problem amongst its young people. Binge drinking is a massive problem in Germany. When the Education and Health Standing Committee was in France, we were told that people were binge drinking and that alcohol consumption was moving in that direction. Part of the issue is that while alcohol consumption in Europe has been dropping, binge drinking has become much worse. A bricklayer who would previously drink two or three bottles of beer throughout the day is not allowed to do that these days. The beer that was consumed all through the week now gets consumed, in a lesser volume, on a Saturday night, with massive health problems. We were told by a liver specialist in Britain that he was now seeing cirrhosis of the liver in people who had not reached 30 years of age. He was in his 60s, and he said that when he started out the youngest people he would see were in their late 40s; now he sees people in their mid to late 20s. We certainly have a major problem with alcohol.

I think parents who want to do the right thing and prevent their kids from drinking until they reach the age of 18 years should be given every support we can give them. On 11 June I very proudly presented a petition for secondary supply laws that Sam Menezes had organised, and I certainly support the principle of secondary supply laws.

The idea of secondary supply laws is basically that no-one other than a parent can authorise their child to drink. If I send my child to someone else’s birthday party, I expect no-one to give my child alcohol if my child is under the age of 18 without my express permission. Currently, there is no law against that. If my child goes to the bottle shop and tries to buy alcohol, they cannot do it—they are forbidden from doing that—yet they can go to somebody else’s place and that parent can serve my child alcohol. I consider that totally unacceptable, and I believe that kids put lot of pressure on each other to have alcohol at their parties. I have some figures from a Ray Morgan research poll done on behalf of the Salvation Army in the early 2000s that showed that 22 per cent of kids aged 14 to 16 admitted to drinking nine to 10 drinks in one session—that is dangerous drinking—and a little more than one in five admitted to having done that in the past month.

Mr J.E. McGrath: Where did they do the survey?

Mr P. ABETZ: That is Australia-wide.

That is a serious issue. Kids will say to mum and dad, “You’re so old-fashioned! Everybody else has alcohol at their parties! Everybody else’s parents let them! You’re the terrible parent who won’t let me drink! I’m going to be the only one not drinking!” Secondary supply laws will require the host parent of the 14, 15 or 16-year-old’s birthday party to get their Johnny to make sure that all his friends’ parents sign something to say their children can have alcohol. Johnny knows full well that most of his mates’ parents will not actually sign for that, and so it will make it so much easier for the parent to stand up to their child and say, “Hey buddy, it’s against the law unless you get written permission from all those kids’ parents.” I believe we need to provide that kind of support to parents in this state.

The serious alcohol problem is exacerbated by alcohol being so incredibly cheap. Back in 2010 somebody alerted me that in a bottle shop just a few hundred metres from my office, a good quality—I am not sure how good the quality was—cleanskin 750-millilitre bottle of wine could be bought for \$1.99. That is cheaper than Lift or Sprite!

Dr M.D. Nahan: What was the name of the shop?

Mr P. ABETZ: It was the one on the corner of Amherst Road and Warton Road. It used to be called Harry Brown’s; I think it is a Dan Murphy’s now.

Mr F.A. Alban: It is cheaper than what’s in the bar, member, as well.

Mr P. ABETZ: Yes.

When the Education and Health Standing Committee did its alcohol inquiry in 2011, the average consumption for every person over the age of, I think, 14 in this state was 12.4 litres of pure alcohol. That was significantly higher than in any other state, so we do have a problem with the excessive consumption of alcohol. We need to recognise that alcohol actually costs this state an enormous amount of money. The figures presented to our committee indicated that state government funding directly expended on medical bills because of road accidents and people suffering ill health because of alcohol-induced sickness and so on was between \$1.5 billion and \$5 billion, depending on the figures used. But the minimum amount that anybody considered a direct expense was \$1.5 billion. If we think about that, the excessive consumption of alcohol is equivalent to building a Mandurah railway line every year.

Mr M.P. Murray: It wouldn’t be an Ellenbrook line, would it?

Mr P. ABETZ: We could probably afford it then, and we could get the Canning Vale railway line as well—first! That has to come before the Ellenbrook line, member!

At the time our committee handed down our report, we made 60 recommendations, which is a lot of recommendations for a government to consider. I was very pleased to see that it eventually led to the liquor review, which will hopefully hand down its report very shortly. I hope that whatever legislative changes are put in place will include secondary supply provisions. I certainly accept that there need to be some protections for people who host the parties to recognise that if a kid sneaks out and brings grog in, the parent who is hosting the party did not actually supply it. There need to be some clauses in the bill that state, “It can be a defence that”, and then go on to explain what the defences would be. The principle of having secondary supply legislation I support 100 per cent.

The other thing we need to recognise is that all the research into alcohol that our committee came across indicates that there are three words beginning with “A” that affect the problem of alcohol. They are accessibility, advertising and affordability. The fact is that the more liquor stores there are per square kilometre—or whatever measurement we want to use—the more alcohol-related antisocial behaviour there ends up being in that particular area.

Mr J.E. McGrath: Just on that point, what do you say to the people who have travelled overseas and seen where you can buy alcohol at a 7-Eleven store or a supermarket? In Japan you can buy it on the street out of vending machines. Did your committee look at that?

Mr P. ABETZ: In Europe alcohol can be bought in the supermarket, but not by children. Again, the easier it is for kids to access alcohol, the more likely there are to be problems.

Mr J.E. McGrath: The point I am making is that it is no easier for a kid to access it here than it is in the UK or Germany or somewhere where you can buy it in a 7-Eleven.

Mr P. ABETZ: They certainly have massive problems with antisocial behaviour. Let us not kid ourselves that this is something that is unique to Australia. It is a problem in the whole western world; there is no question about that.

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Another issue was advertising, which the member for Maylands mentioned, so I will not discuss that. The other issue was affordability. The cheaper alcohol is, the more likely kids are to access it because they can afford to get it. One question that has been asked is what impact it would have if we could raise the minimum legal drinking age back up to 21. It is interesting that research in Australia has shown that decreasing the minimum age in the 1960s or 1970s, depending on the state, actually resulted in a 10 per cent increase in road trauma per 100 000 people in that age group—that is, people killed or seriously injured in motor vehicle accidents. It is interesting that in the United States in 1986, when Ronald Reagan was President, he pushed to get the drinking age in every state up to 21. He got every state to toe the line because if they did not, they did not get federal road funding.

Dr M.D. Nahan: A lot of those states had lower alcohol beer available, at 3.2 per cent, which is our light beer.

Mr P. ABETZ: Which would probably make a difference.

Dr M.D. Nahan: You could not buy full strength beer until you were 21.

Mr P. ABETZ: That brings me to the point I was leading up to. If a young person aged 18 goes into a pub, it is a controlled drinking context where the responsible service of liquor laws require that if the person is intoxicated they are not allowed to be served any more alcohol. It is too difficult politically to raise the minimum drinking age to 21; however, one thing we could do, and I put it in a submission to the liquor review, is allow young people to drink at the age of 18, but not purchase takeaway liquor. One of the things that is happening is that because an 18-year-old may have mates who are only 15, 16 or 17, he will go to a takeaway liquor store and buy grog for his mates, and that means they will have greater access to alcohol. If we do not allow young people to purchase takeaway alcohol until they are 21, by that time their mates will probably be 18 or 19, and it will not be as big a problem. I believe that would make a significant difference to the issues that we face with alcohol in this state.

Whether we like it or not, alcohol is a problem for not only young people but also a lot of older people. One in four Australians will at some stage in their lives struggle with alcohol addiction. That is a massive percentage of people who drink too much and struggle to limit their intake of alcohol. WA Police told us in our inquiry that 75 per cent of all police call-outs are alcohol related. If we could eliminate the excessive consumption of alcohol, our police would not know what to do with all the time that they would have. That is the reality. I am sure that they would find useful things to do, and perhaps there would be more police patrols on our roads and more burglaries would be investigated and so on —

Mr J.E. McGrath: If you went back to the days of the horse and cart, we would not need police on our roads at all!

Mr P. ABETZ: We would, because people could be drunk and fall off their horse, and the police would need to pick them up!

Another issue is foetal alcohol syndrome, which often affects teenage girls. If girls drink during the early stages of their pregnancy, the result is that their child will suffer from foetal alcohol syndrome.

The move to increase the minimum legal drinking age is gaining some momentum. Professor John Toumbourou, the chair of health psychology at Deakin University, authored a report in 2013 in which he argued strongly for the importance of increasing the minimum drinking age. That is because young men's brains are not completely developed until the age of 25, and alcohol consumption—particularly excessive consumption, but even low-level consumption—can cause significant damage at that early brain development stage.

I absolutely support the principle of the member's bill to introduce secondary supply laws. However, we need to do a bit more around that. I therefore look forward to the liquor review report, and hopefully we can bring before this Parliament before too long a range of measures that will help to reduce the alcohol problem in this state. The focus of the Liquor Control Act is to regulate the development of the alcohol industry. I believe that the primary focus of the Liquor Control Act should be public health. Public health should be the number one priority, and secondary supply laws are an important part of that.

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie-Preston) [6.29 pm] — in reply: It has certainly been a very good debate on the Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2013. The variations that have come out of this debate all have one theme: the overconsumption of alcohol has many ages and occurs in many areas. I believe that people set their patterns early in life, and that is one of the reasons that I brought this bill to the house. The bill, very simply, revolves around the term "secondary supply", which is the term that applies to the provision of alcohol in a private home to people under the age of 18—in other words, minors. That is the idea behind the bill. I was very surprised at the Minister for Racing and Gaming's comment that we have waited this long for it; we have not waited as long for it as I have waited for the review to be completed, and that is one of the reasons why the bill did not come

before the house. I was hoping that the minister would get a move on and get some work done and bring his bill into the house so I could support it. Although it looks as though the government will vote this bill down, I am hopeful now that I will be able to come back and have a simple, easy-to-read resolution within the minister's bill. I was concerned at what I heard about getting the regulations right. Over-regulation is just as bad as under-regulation, but, over and above that, this is about empowering parents to say no. I am sure everyone in the chamber who has children would have experienced, on many occasions, "But Jane's going to have half a dozen UDLs and I'm not allowed!", or, "Jane's dad's going to supply half a dozen; it'll only be a little bit!" Parents do not want their children to have alcohol; that is where I am trying to make the point, by inserting some very simple provisions, such as proposed section 119AA(2), which states —

A person must not supply liquor to a juvenile on unlicensed premises unless the person is a parent or guardian of the juvenile.

That is quite simple. Proposed section 119AA(3) provides that if a person is going to supply liquor to a juvenile on unlicensed premises, that person must obtain the said juvenile's parent or guardian's permission to supply it. That is very, very basic and very simple. That is the intent of the legislation. If we move away from that, it will be a lawyer's field day, and I do not want to see that. I want parents to be able to have their say and say, "No, you're not going to have that", or, "You've got permission; you can have two beers because dad said so on the way to the party". Something like that keeps it simple, minister.

As we go through this, there is a time factor involved. We have heard the stats from many speakers about how many people have been injured. While we are sitting here tonight, someone will probably be seriously injured, and whether overage or underage, alcohol will be involved. We also heard this statistic about 75 per cent of domestic violence cases being attributed to alcohol.

I am not focusing on that; I am focusing on young people, and most people have forgotten that children as young as 10 years of age are admitted to hospital with alcohol problems. That is what I am looking at. That is where the real focus is. Yes, under the liquor review other areas will be looked at, but let us bring it back to the simple equation about having the right to say no. How many parents have said during schoolies week, "Yes, it's good that you're taking the kids down to the beach house at Augusta", or wherever it may be, "but I don't want my child to drink"? That can be disobeyed by the supervising parent who may—may—go down with the children, and there is no breaking of the law by that parent. That is the real basis of where I am coming from; it is about having some say as a parent. It is quite a wrap-up on that that we cannot do enough to prevent young people from getting hurt. I am sure that many people would be appalled if they were to go to the emergency departments of some of the suburban hospitals and see the age of people coming in who have been affected by alcohol.

The minister said it took a long time for me to bring in this legislation, but, in the meantime, we have presented petitions, and I would like to congratulate Sam Menezes, who presented to this house a petition bearing 6 030 names. I met the lady and she is a mum who cares. She would like to have had the right to say to her children and to the people whose parties they were going to, "No, you cannot drink and, no, I don't want you to supply that alcohol." Again, that is very simple. She is also concerned about the bigger picture. That is why we brought in this bill.

It is amazing to have the support of various people. I will read them out because it is fair on the people who wrote to me and said they support my actions: the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth, Mike Daube; Youth Affairs Council of WA, Craig Comrie; Commissioner for Children and Young People, Michelle Scott; Australian Drug Foundation, John Rogerson; Leigh Clark Foundation, Bruce Clark; Keep em Safe, Helen Torpy; Deakin University's chair in health psychology and representative of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, Professor John Toumbourou; and the Department for Child Protection and Family Support. They are all very high on the ladder in professional help and trying to prevent problems associated with alcohol and children. There is support in the community for this bill. I would like to think that the support will be here tonight, but I do not see that coming, so I am looking at the support that the minister will give to this amendment in the future. The support will be there to ensure that people, such as those health professionals, get a result from their hard work. We see tragedies involving children aged 10 to 17 years. I am not talking about older people engaging in over-the-top binge drinking. I am talking about younger people. Having been a 17-year-old, I concede that if I could have jumped 10 fences to get half a dozen beers, I would have done it, and I am sure 17-year-olds have not changed that much. Alcohol abuse is problematic for younger people, particularly young girls. There is nothing more appalling, I think, than a very well-dressed 16 or 17-year-old girl wobbling along on high heels and coming out of a party rotten. It is appalling to see people lying on the ground throwing up and being very ill, which stops them from drinking for about a day.

I am not quite sure how to put this, but I refer to something called FUBAR. I do not know whether people have heard of that, but it is a saying used by teenagers when people get over-intoxicated. The acronym starts with an

Extract from *Hansard*

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Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Roger Cook; Mr David Templeman; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr John McGrath; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Mick Murray

F, and I will miss the first word in the acronym, but the rest of the acronym stands for “up beyond all recognition”. That is a saying for when someone is lying on the ground, absolutely out of it, vomiting, and cannot stand up. Young people say, “Look at that; they’re FUBAR-ed.” That means they are out of the game. People do not understand that it is not funny. It is not funny to see a young person lying on the ground vomiting when they could choke on that vomit and die. That is not funny and in my world it is not the way to go about it. We need this legislation to make sure that in the future we have some control as parents. I am sure that if I took this *Hansard* home to my children, they would tell me to get over it, but I understand that the age at which people start drinking is getting younger and younger. The age of 21 was mentioned by the member for South Perth. I remember the days when 21 was the legal drinking age. I would have a squash in front of me and a beer beside that. When the police came along, I would drink the squash. It was a different era when the Vietnam War was on. One of the arguments we had if we got pulled up by the coppers for drinking was, “You’ll send me off to war, but you won’t allow me to have a drink.” That was a standard argument, and people never got booked for underage drinking, because it was a fair one. As we have gone along, the drinking age has been lowered to 18 years of age. There was a spread from 21 to 18 years of age, and now the spread is from 18 to 14 years of age. That is a problem. Too many people think that it is okay. The attitude needs to change.

It was refreshing to hear the member for Southern River say that it is a problem not just in Western Australia. I went to Norway and there were a heap of young kids in a park with bottles of vodka. They would have been underage. The price of alcohol there is extremely high. Norway thought it could fix the problem by pushing up the price of alcohol. I suppose it works in some ways, but, again, they can get a cheaper brand—the \$1.99 bottle—to satisfy their need, and it does become a need. They were very young people in the park. Another time I was walking through Kings Cross and there were about five young kids of 10 or 11 years of age who were off their face on alcohol or drugs. They looked as though they had not had a wash for many months. They were walking up and down the street and harassing people for money. That is how far we have declined. Anyone would think it is a Charles Dickens story. It is not; it is an Australian story that we have to deal with quickly with a review of the act.

I have heard enough to understand where we are going tonight. I really implore the minister to get a move on with the bill. Bring it into this place so that it can be debated. I think the member for South Perth said that the bill will take ages to go through because it is wideranging. Maybe we could take out a section and try to look after our youth, even if it is just for the summer period. The last thing I want to see is a child—not a young adult—who is affected by alcohol go for a swim and drown or get run over on a pushbike on the road. These are the sorts of things that I do not want to see. It has been going on for long enough. Yes, I can understand the reasons for the extensions of time for the inquiries and the review, but we cannot say that there are no papers to look at. There is a paper by the Legislative Assembly Social Policy Committee of the New South Wales Parliament. The papers are there. We do not have to do it over and again. Pick the eyes out of it, bring it in here and let us get the legislation done. Let us give the mums and dads of today some comfort that when they send their children out, they know that they will come home safely. In saying that, I commend this bill to the house.

Division

Question put and a division taken, the Deputy Speaker casting her vote with the noes, with the following result —

Ayes (15)

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Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Roger Cook; Mr David Templeman; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Terry Waldron; Mr John McGrath; Mr Peter Abetz; Mr Mick Murray

Ms L.L. Baker
Mr R.H. Cook
Ms J. Farrer
Mr W.J. Johnston

Mr D.J. Kelly
Mr F.M. Logan
Mr M. McGowan
Mr M.P. Murray

Mr P. Papalia
Mr J.R. Quigley
Ms M.M. Quirk
Mrs M.H. Roberts

Ms R. Saffioti
Mr C.J. Tallentire
Ms S.F. McGurk (*Teller*)

Noes (29)

Mr P. Abetz
Mr F.A. Alban
Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr I.C. Blayney
Mr I.M. Britza
Mr T.R. Buswell
Mr G.M. Castrilli
Mr V.A. Catania

Mr M.J. Cowper
Mr J.H.D. Day
Ms W.M. Duncan
Ms E. Evangel
Mr J.M. Francis
Mrs G.J. Godfrey
Dr K.D. Hames
Mr C.D. Hatton

Mr A.P. Jacob
Mr S.K. L'Estrange
Mr R.S. Love
Mr W.R. Marmion
Mr P.T. Miles
Mr N.W. Morton
Dr M.D. Nahan
Mr D.C. Nalder

Mr J. Norberger
Mr A.J. Simpson
Mr M.H. Taylor
Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr J.E. McGrath (*Teller*)

Pairs

Mr B.S. Wyatt
Mr P.B. Watson
Ms J.M. Freeman
Mr P.C. Tinley
Mr D.A. Templeman
Dr A.D. Buti

Ms A.R. Mitchell
Mrs L.M. Harvey
Ms M.J. Davies
Mr D.T. Redman
Mr A. Krsticevic
Mr R.F. Johnson

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.