

QUEENSLAND HOTELS ASSOCIATION

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Canberra's Hidden Alcohol Tax Hits Aussies Hard: Enough is Enough

As Australians grapple with a cost-of-living crisis, Canberra is set to rake in a staggering \$8 billion this year from taxing beer and spirits. This comes as the alcohol excise tax is set to rise for the 83rd time since 1983, making Australia's beer tax rate the third highest in the OECD.

The Queensland Hotels Association (QHA) is calling for a discount or freeze on excise rates for beer and spirits sold "on premise" in licensed venues such as pubs, bars, and clubs. This discount would apply only to drinks poured into a glass by staff in these venues, not to bottleshops.

"With everyday expenses soaring, sharing a drink at the local pub with friends shouldn't become a luxury. This tax hike is hitting Aussies where it hurts most – their social lives and wallets." said QHA Chief Executive Bernie Hogan

"Pubs are the heart of Australian communities, and this relentless tax increase is making it harder for locals to come together and enjoy a simple beer with mates. It's time to say enough is enough."

"This hidden tax isn't just affecting drinkers – it's a tax on the jobs of the people pouring your drinks. For a small country pub selling just 15 kegs a week, the tax collected is over \$1,100 per week, a cost that inevitably gets passed on to customers. This is simply out of touch with everyday Australians" continued Mr Hogan.

****Background:****

The alcohol excise is indexed twice a year, in February and August, with the next increase due in February 2025. Since indexation was introduced in 1983, this will be the 83rd time the excise has risen.

The AHA's proposal for a discount or freeze on excise rates aims to support licensed venues, hospitality workers and their patrons recognising the challenging economic times.

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