

It's your
turn to shout

AT THE HEART
OF THE MATTER,
NZ DRUG
FOUNDATION.

Te Tūāpapa Tarukino o Aotearoa

Have your say on Alcohol in your Community



It's about encouraging social responsibility and removing the harmful consequences of the saturation of liquor stores in our communities.

TAIMA FAGALOA, PORIRUA CITY COUNCILLOR

HAVE YOUR SAY ON ALCOHOL LAW CHANGES.

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A new alcohol bill is currently before Parliament. The Alcohol Reform Bill is the Government's response to the review of our liquor laws by Law Commission President Sir Geoffrey Palmer. The Law Commission made 153 recommendations but not all have been accepted. There is still time to persuade the Government to strengthen its response.

FACTSHEETS

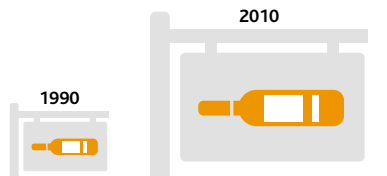
- 1 Background to Alcohol Reform Bill
- 2 Alcohol Pricing
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- 5 Drink Driving
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KEY FACTS

CURRENTLY, ALCOHOL LICENCES ARE EASY TO GET AND HARD TO LOSE.

THE PUBLIC HAS LITTLE OR NO INPUT INTO WHERE AND HOW ALCOHOL IS SOLD.



THE NUMBER OF OUTLETS LICENSED TO SELL ALCOHOL HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED FROM 6,296 IN 1990 TO 14,424 IN 2010.

24^{HOUR}

LIQUOR LICENSING CONTRIBUTES TO DISORDER, VIOLENCE, CRIME AND TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.

COMMUNITIES ARE POWERLESS TO STOP THE INCREASE OF LIQUOR OUTLETS IN THEIR NEIGHBOURHOODS.



OUTLET DENSITY

Outlet density is the term used to describe how tightly liquor outlets are clustered together in a community. High outlet density means there are many outlets close together in a neighbourhood.

What did the Law Commission recommend?

- Communities should have more input into local licensing decisions.
- Increased community say should be achieved by requiring every local authority to adopt a **local alcohol policy**. Local alcohol policies would be required to take into account:
 - the number, type and hours of licensed premises
 - the social and economic make-up of the community
 - the level of alcohol-related problems in the area
 - ways to manage intoxicated people in public, working with Police, ambulance and health services
 - permitted areas for licensed premises and areas to be covered by a liquor ban.
- Local alcohol policies should also include a plan for reducing alcohol-related harm, local restrictions on opening hours and a list of areas where outlet density is high and no new licence applications should be accepted.
- Communities should be meaningfully involved on proposed local alcohol policies.
- Councils should involve local iwi and hapū, Police, licensing inspectors, medical officers of health and other appropriate people when developing local alcohol policies.
- At the moment, decisions about liquor licensing are based only on how suitable the applicant is. Decision makers should also take other factors into account such as the local alcohol policy, the aim of the law to reduce alcohol harms, the impacts of an outlet on a neighbourhood and whether an applicant can handle the responsibilities that come with running a licensed liquor outlet.
- The Law Commission also recommended reducing the hours that liquor can be sold across the country so that:
 - all off-licences (e.g. supermarkets and bottle stores) have to close by 10pm and not reopen until 9am
 - all on-licences (e.g. nightclubs and bars) have to close by 4am and not reopen until 9am, with a compulsory one-way door policy from 2am. This means that people cannot enter after 2am but don't have to leave until closing time.

What was the Government's response?

- **Fair.** The Government largely accepted all the Law Commission's recommendations around local alcohol policies with one important exception – they will remain voluntary. Local authorities who adopt a local alcohol policy would also need to follow guidelines suggested by the Law Commission.

“Alcohol is destroying our community. I work with families, and we can see the damage to them, to their children and to the wider community. I see it in the courts, the hospitals, family violence.”

A COMMUNITY WORKER IN OTARA SPEAKS OUT AT A CONSULTATION MEETING WITH THE LAW COMMISSION

- The Government accepted the Law Commission's proposals to require licensing decision makers to consider a range of factors other than just the applicant's suitability when processing applications.
- The Government also accepted the need to restrict trading hours but suggested different hours to what the Law Commission recommended. It suggests maximum trading hours of:
 - 7am to 11pm for off-licences
 - 8am to 4am for on-licences, with a one-way door policy left up to decision makers rather than be compulsory.



OVERALL GRADE AWARDED

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SUFFICIENT, AN ACHIEVEMENT THAT DEMONSTRATES SATISFACTORY UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE BUT IS ONLY BEGINNING TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS. A WATERED-DOWN RESPONSE.

Research and experience shows:

“If you place another liquor store in Cannons Creek, then you might as well place a bigger Police station there as well.”

FA'AMATUAINU POUTOA, YOUTH WORKER IN PORIRUA

- High density of liquor outlets leads to increased competition, lower prices and greater availability. When alcohol availability is high, so are rates of harm. Communities have had no power to stop increasing numbers of liquor outlets in their neighbourhoods.
 - High liquor outlet density is associated with increased total Police events, including:
 - anti-social behaviour
 - dishonesty offences
 - drug and alcohol offences
 - family violence
 - property damage
 - sexual offences
 - violent crime
 - traffic offences
 - motor vehicle accidents.
 - If local alcohol policies are voluntary, not all local authorities will develop one. Without a local alcohol policy, communities are denied the level of input needed to influence licence application decisions and the ability to retake control of alcohol harms in their neighbourhoods.
 - Restricting trading hours reduces excessive drinking, targets the heaviest drinkers and has the least impact on low to moderate drinkers. It reduces alcohol-related crime, violence and road accidents.
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“ Drinking, urination, rubbish, fighting, broken windows, graffiti, begging, theft will happen related to the proposed new store. Wherever there are seats and a bottle store in K Road, this happens. ”

AN AUCKLAND SECURITY GUARD

What should the Government do?

- The Government should make local alcohol policies mandatory for all local authorities. This would:
 - ensure **all** communities have a say about alcohol in their neighbourhoods
 - encourage **all** local authorities to consider the nature of alcohol use in their district
 - ensure the licensing process is consistent nationwide.
- The Government's decision to broaden the factors to be considered by licensing authorities when reviewing applications is a good one.
- Taking into account the impact of any new licensed premises on the surrounding community will help prevent the clustering of alcohol outlets, reduce the availability of alcohol and reduce alcohol harms.
- The Government should accept the restricted trading hours recommended by the Law Commission and make a one-way door policy compulsory.

What should you do?

- Have your say in creating better alcohol laws by making a written submission to the Select Committee before Tuesday 1 February 2011. This can be as short or long as you like, and you can use this toolkit to help you.
- Tell the Government that it should accept all 153 of the Law Commission's recommendations.
- If you make a written submission, you should also make an oral presentation. You can be as creative as you like. This is your chance to tell your story about the impact of alcohol on your family and community and to tell our politicians about the changes that you want to see.
- Encourage your friends, family and community to get involved. The more New Zealanders who speak out, the more likely it is that the Government will listen.
- Ask to meet with or write to your local MP and let them know your views on alcohol law change.
- Visit www.drugfoundation.org.nz/your-turn-to-shout for more information and the full toolkit.

ABOUT US



The New Zealand Drug Foundation has long been interested in how laws governing the sale and supply of alcohol could be strengthened to reduce alcohol-related harm and create a healthier drinking culture in New Zealand. We provide leadership and representation for our nationwide membership of organisations and individuals working on alcohol and drug issues. This factsheet is one of a number we have developed as part of a toolkit to support communities to be heard on the Alcohol Reform Bill. **Check out our website for more information and the full toolkit.**

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