NORTHERN TERRITORY
***of* AUSTRALIA**

Dr TANZIL RAHMAN MLA

Member for Fong Lim

HANSARD EXTRACT

ALCOHOL HARM REDUCTION

THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2025

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need action now, not next year. We do not need debate on this topic; we need action. This government promised action, and today I thoroughly support the minister in pushing this through on urgency because I will ensure the people of Drysdale get the action that I promised them.

I have been consistently firm in my electorate on the problem of alcohol. I was the first member of parliament to make a referral to the Liquor Commission, and now seven takeaway liquor stores will go to public inquiry for review. I will add to that by supporting this urgency motion to ensure that we can get banned drinker orders from seven to 28 days today, not next week, month or year. It will happen today, and I stand by that the whole way.

Dr RAHMAN (Fong Lim): Madam Speaker, I will make a couple of points on this matter, given it has been raised. I have already spoken about this process and the circus we go through every time about what needs to be sent to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee, the fact that our system is imperfect, that Labor did not have one and that we have one that does not work quite to its liking. We cannot keep going around on this issue.

I will say a couple of constructive things. Two things can be right at the same time. It is not a secret; I have said that I broadly agree with a lot of the principles that have been raised by the opposition and crossbench, but I am also compelled by what Minister Cahill had to say in this space. The fact is we are not introducing a new and novel policy element. Yes, this matter has come in on urgency, without notice, but we all know what happens over summer in the Northern Territory in relation to alcohol harm.

We have a clear and specific recommendation about moving BDOs from seven to 28 days. We have a body of evidence about what the BDO does. Some of that is contested; there is some indication that the BDO is imperfect and that we could do more in other spaces, and more will be, and is being, done. Minister Edgington, the Alcohol Policy minister, has alluded to that being the case.

Mr Young: Come on, Tanzil; it is about governance.

Madam SPEAKER: Silence!

Dr RAHMAN: I take the interjection from the Member for Daly. I care deeply about governance, process and precedent. This government has set a precedent about how it operates in relation to scrutiny. By and large, I am not disputing what has been said by the opposition and crossbench; we use urgency powers when we feel they are necessary, and we have used them more than other people have for a while. So far, it has done more good than harm; it has done no tangible harm.

In my perfect world—as I made it clear to the Member for Daly when we attended the legislative scrutiny conference—it would be better for us to introduce more robust governance mechanisms and standards for processes across a range of matters. However, this is not the issue to die on a hill for in relation to that principle; sometimes you cannot let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

The Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence made a compelling case. We are not afraid to make the tough decisions. On this issue, yes, it has become clear to us late in the year that there is an opportunity to do some good by making this change rather than waiting another three months when we know that, actually, we would have missed the boat on doing anything useful over the summer period. That is the reality.

I am not getting up here to just pound on the opposition and the crossbench and say, 'What you are saying is nonsense'. It is not nonsense; there is some merit to what you are saying, but equally have a mind to the fact that the government has thought this through as well. There is logic and reason to this.

I do not know about the remainder of the recommendations. I know that more things can be done in the alcohol harm reduction space, but I am also mindful that I am not the minister. The minister has made a calculation based on what we know from a long period of using the Banned Drinker Register. The register has broad bipartisan support. People have knocked it at various times, but generally speaking, this government is—as the former government did—still using the BDR to try to minimise harm and mitigate damage in the alcohol and DV space. Two things can be right at the same time, which is what I think is happening today.

As a matter of high principle there is a lot to be said for the fact that we could do better on scrutiny processes and the mechanisms of this parliament; there is no doubt about that. However, we have a reasonable body of controlled evidence that suggests the BDO, when we use it, does good and that if we extended it from seven to 28 days, it would do more good. Over the Christmas period when, quite frankly, we know there has

been carnage with alcohol-related violence and DV, it would be a useful arrow to add to the quiver of the archer.

I think it is worth us getting behind this and not fighting this matter on principle. If you want to fight for the principle, fight for it separately. We cannot keep having the same argument every time we want to send something to a scrutiny committee. If you want to change the mechanism, bring something to the table, move a motion—move something in GBD when we can talk about that as a specific issue—but on this issue the Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Minister for Alcohol Policy are right, and I support us moving this on urgency for that reason.

Madam SPEAKER: The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The Assembly divided:

Ayes 7	Noes 16
Mr Brown	Ms Boothby
J Davis	Mr Burgoyne
Mr Guyula	Ms Cahill
K McNamara	Mrs Carlson
Mr Paech	Mr Charls
Ms Uibo	Mr Edgington
Mr Young	Mrs Finocchiaro
	Mrs Hersey
	Mr Howe
	Mr Kerle
	Mr Mackay
	Mr Maley
	Mr Patel
	Dr Rahman
	Mr Yan
	Mrs Zio

Amendment not agreed to.

Madam SPEAKER: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Mr EDGINGTON (Leader of Government Business): Madam Speaker, I move that the second reading of the Bill be made an order of the day for a later hour, having precedence over Government Business Order of the Day number 1.

Motion agreed to.

TRADE, BUSINESS AND ASIAN RELATIONS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (STREAMLINING LICENSING SCHEMES AND OTHER MATTERS) BILL
Serial 47

Ms CAHILL (Trade, Business and Asian Relations): Madam Speaker, I present a Bill entitled the Trade, Business and Asian Relations Legislation Amendment (Streamlining Licensing Schemes and Other Matters) Bill 2025, and I table the explanatory statement.

I move that the Bill be read a first time.

The purpose of the Trade, Business and Asian Relations Legislation Amendment (Streamlining Licensing Schemes and Other Matters) Bill 2025—hereinafter, the Bill—is to make minor amendments to various Northern Territory legislation under the administration of the Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations.

The Bill removes unnecessary regulatory and administrative burdens for individuals and businesses who carry out occupations or trades, as well as associations. The range of occupations and industries that will benefit include real estate, commercial and private agents; pawnbrokers and second-hand dealers; plumbers and drainers; and security officers.