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To the Alcohol review team,

My name is Damian O'Brien, I moved to the Northern Territory in 1999 with a firm 2 year plan to return home. I moved specifically from Brisbane to join the Northern Territory police service. Six months later my now wife moved to Darwin as well, once she completed her Veterinary degree. My career in the Northern Territory police was vast, I completed duties including general duties, community work including Nguiu and Garden Point. I finished in special operations section, drug and organized crime. My 2 year plan did not work, my wife now owns and operates the Litchfield vet Hospital and I purchased the Virginia Tavern in 2008. Opportunities have arisen and I am looking forward to my new challenge at Coolalinga Tavern opening early 2018. My wife and I have 2 beautiful girls and now have a great future in the territory. Being involved with the law enforcement side and now the licensee at Virginia Tavern I would like to offer comment on the Alcohol policies and legislation Review 2017.

The Virginia Tavern employees 14 local staff, operates as a unique family oriented Tavern and has an excellent compliance record. Virginia Tavern Supports various community organisation and would donate over \$20000.00 per year to community based events including Fishing competitions, Darwin Rural and Bush darts, Fullwood Racing and Litchfield bears to name a few. The liquor industry in the Northern Territory presents a number of unique issues experienced in a few other locations around the country and I welcome the review.

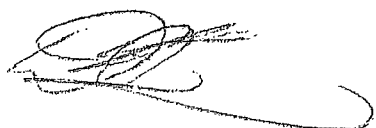
I feel the liquor industry in the territory is highly scrutinized and regulated. The Industry is highly taxed (and will increase in the near future with gaming) The expenses involved in running a small Tavern such as Virginia is mounting, questioning its viability due to size. The GST component in my business is far more compared to my colleagues with bottle shops as they sell the same product through their drive through far less than Virginia Tavern over the bar. Any further increases in cost could be disastrous for venues similar to mine.

About 2010 I purchased a 12 seater Mini bus and attempted to help my Patrons return home after consuming alcohol. An initiative I was happy to fund for my patrons. The "red tape" experienced was unbelievable, I had to get my solicitor involved and it eventually was approved with conditions. I was not allowed to pick people up, advertise, a H endorsement was required to drive the bus and the list went on. The bus is parked up and used maybe twice a year. As a licensee attempting to help you with issues that have been raised in the discussion papers, I found these little things to help too hard to even bother.

I cannot talk for my peers but from what I have seen since joining the liquor Industry is amazing, we all contribute to the community on a significant level and attempt to do the right thing in all areas around the liquor industry and community. If there were any further increase in expenses for the Virginia Tavern the local footy teams, Bush Darts and others will be on their own to fundraise.

Being the holder of a Liquor license in the territory I feel this is the most scrutinised position I have ever held, including my previous career. Once again I welcome the review but please don't jeopardise my families financial future and a number of community events that makes the territory great.

I wish you well and hope we all can overcome this important issue.



Regards
Damian O'Brien
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