

Drinking curfew spiked

More exemptions but pubs, clubs say it's not enough

SARAH MARTIN
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE hotel and club industry says watered-down changes to laws banning the sale of alcohol between 4am and 7am do not go far enough.

The State Government had announced it would force pubs and clubs, except for the Adelaide Casino, to close between 4am and 7am in an attempt to curb problem

drinking and alcohol-related violence.

Yesterday, however, responding to concerns that the Bill would be blocked by the Liberal Party in the Upper House, the Rann Government said it would amend its proposal, giving the Liquor Licensing Commissioner power to allow further exemptions.

Australian Hotels Association SA general manager Ian

Horne said the amendments were insufficient, and still unfairly treated late-night traders.

"We remain concerned that this Government gives the Adelaide Casino a free pass to 24-hour trading but builds onerous hurdles and barriers to other legitimate operators," he said.

"This does not seem a legitimate or genuine effort to get better outcomes... (and) the

industry is not convinced that the current Bill adds any value to achieving safer communities, other than more red tape, administration burden and infringement notices for the operator, not the offender."

Consumer Affairs Minister Gail Gago said licensed venues that passed a public interest test, and demonstrated they had harm-minimisation measures, may be given a

licence to trade. "This Government is determined to press ahead with real reforms to improve the safety of our streets, and to minimise alcohol-related harm," she said.

Opposition consumer affairs spokeswoman Michelle Lensink said the amendment may not go far enough to gain the support of the party.

"I think it is bad law, and it is bad law whether or not

it applies to hotels or the casino," she said.

Ms Lensink presented to Parliament the number of fines issued to licensed premises between January 2008 and April this year.

Only two fines had been issued for liquor offences to under-age people, no fines for supplying liquor to an intoxicated person, and three fines for a licensee not complying with a licence.



Disney date for young performers

PATRICK McDONALD
ARTS EDITOR

A DOZEN young South Australians will help create a big song and dance across the US.

Members of the Australian Youth Choir and Australian Youth Dance Theatre will join 40 other performers from Australia on stage in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Washington and Los Angeles. The 18-day tour, which starts on Saturday, is being conducted under the umbrella of the National Institute of Youth Performing Arts Australia.

Choir member India Armstrong, 15, of Willunga, said it would be "the most amazing experience".

One of the tour highlights will be performing in the Fantasy Festival Stage Theatre at Disneyland.

Other choristers are Lauren Allison, Melanie Archer, Nicola Grant, Cassandra Heffernan and Punitha Rajendra and the dancers are Justis and Tyla Tomalin, Nicole Edmunds, Brianna McGee, Carmen Thomas and Alexandra Tabe.

AMERICAN DREAM COME TRUE: Dancers Carmen Thomas and Brianna McGee and members of the Australian Youth Choir prepare for their trip to the United States.

Picture: JAMES ELSBY

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