



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

By

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STRENGTHENING THE SECURITY OF LICENSED PREMISES

5TH JULY 2013

Mr. Speaker, this Government's commitment to the safety and security of the community extends to the enjoyment of an evening out at a restaurant or bar, and to the fellowship that takes place in community clubs and other licensed premises.

In keeping with current trends there are occasions when that enjoyment is disturbed by an anti-social element also present in this community.

Mr. Speaker, owners and operators of licensed premises should be able to promote their establishments and welcome their patrons without the requirement for undue layers of security. Patrons of licensed premises should be able to relax and enjoy

the atmosphere of their chosen night-spot without worrying about violence or general anti-social behaviour in their midst. However, recent incidents have demonstrated the need for extra care to be taken and for owners and operators of licensed premises to remain vigilant and to be prepared to take action.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Public Safety believes that there is a wealth of knowledge about the running of licensed premises in Bermuda and there is the potential for industry success where we encourage effective, open communication and collaboration around best practice in the area of security and safety in this business.

Therefore, I am pleased to advise this Honourable House that I have organized a meeting of owners and operators of bars, restaurants and clubs for Wednesday, July 17th at 3pm.

The aim of this meeting is to hear directly from those people most familiar with the issues that exist in this business today and to initiate a dialogue which will promote a safer environment for them and their patrons.

Separately, **Mr. Speaker**, with the Department of National Drug Control, the Ministry is examining relevant legislation to determine what can be done to provide a framework for safer experiences at licensed premises. I can advise Honourable Members that I recently led a full discussion in Cabinet on liquor license policy generally and our overall approach to the sale, consumption and regulation of alcohol in Bermuda.

Included in the discussion were proposals like:

- (i) Mandatory ID checks or “carding” on entry to bars and nightclubs,
- (ii) Activating the bar code on every driver's license to assist in ID checks at licensed premises,
- (iii) Properly classifying so called “energy drinks” to ensure that consumers are well informed of their properties and contents,
- (iv) Examining our laws to determine if roadside sobriety checks can be introduced, and
- (v) Strengthening the enforcement of the existing laws under the Liquor Licensing Act 1947.

Mr. Speaker, alcohol and licensed premises can be enjoyed by all person of age to do so. However, we must encourage

responsible alcohol consumption and encourage a healthy attitude towards alcohol in the community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.