



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

GALAXY POLL: MAJORITY SUPPORT FOR RETENTION OF NSW TRADING HOUR MEASURES

21 February 2016: New polling has found more than two thirds of New South Wales residents support the continuation of the State Government's measures to reduce alcohol-related violence.

The poll conducted by Galaxy Research found 68 per cent of New South Wales residents support keeping the current package of measures in place, which includes 3am last drinks and a 1.30am lockout in Sydney, along with a 10pm close for takeaway alcohol state-wide.

Commissioned by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE), the polling comes as the Baird Government is under mounting pressure from coordinated industry efforts to undermine the lifesaving and successful measures.

The poll found 80 per cent of New South Wales residents believe Australia has a problem with alcohol, up from 74 per cent in 2015.

When asked their perspectives on a range of alcohol-related policies, 80 per cent of New South Wales residents indicated their support for a closing time for pubs and clubs of no later than 3am. There was also strong support for increased penalties for violent offenders (86 per cent), increased police presence (85 per cent) and better public transport (82 per cent).

FARE Chief Executive Michael Thorn says the Galaxy polling makes very clear the community recognises that the very modest trading hour restrictions which were introduced into New South Wales two years ago have been highly successful in reducing alcohol-fuelled violence and saving lives.

"With 68 per cent of New South Wales residents in favour, there is overwhelming majority support for the government's existing modest trading measures to remain in place. The people of New South Wales clearly understand that these policies have created a healthier and safer New South Wales," Mr Thorn said.

Ahead of an anti-lockout rally planned for Sydney, Mr Thorn says it's important that the voice of a noisy and self-interested industry lobby group be placed in a wider context of what is widespread majority support throughout the New South Wales community.

"There is currently underway a well organised, highly vocal, industry-backed campaign to undermine the trading hour measures, but it's very important that we don't make the mistake of thinking this noisy minority represents the wishes of the majority of New South Wales voters because they don't," Mr Thorn said.



Foundation for Alcohol
Research & Education

The Galaxy poll also found more than one in four residents have been affected by alcohol-related violence, with one in six (15 per cent) reporting they have been a direct victim, and one in five New South Wales residents has had a family or friend who has been affected by alcohol-related violence.

Mr Thorn says the people of New South Wales now recognise that harms caused by alcohol are far reaching.

“The impact of alcohol-fuelled violence extends beyond the immediate victim. It effects those who bear witness to the incident, and the victim’s family and friends. And it places a huge burden on local hospitals and emergency workers, and costs the state and the New South Wales taxpayers dearly. A majority of residents understand that, and clearly believe that a modest reduction in trading hours is a very small price to pay when it returns such significant and worthwhile benefits,” Mr Thorn said.

View the full report 2016 New South Wales poll: Perspectives on alcohol

Michael Thorn (@MichaelTThorn) is available for interview.

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The **Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)** is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to stop the harm caused by alcohol. Alcohol harm in Australia is significant. Over 5,500 lives are lost every year and more than 157,000 people are hospitalised making alcohol one of our nation’s greatest preventative health challenges.

For over a decade, FARE has been working with communities, governments, health professionals and police across the country to stop alcohol harms by supporting world-leading research, raising public awareness and advocating for changes to alcohol policy. In that time FARE has helped more than 750 communities and organisations, and backed over 1,400 projects around Australia.



Galaxy Research is an Australian market researching company which conducts opinion polling throughout the country with results published in all major Australian newspapers.