



Media Release

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TIM QUILTY PRESENTS PETITION TO PARLIAMENT SUPPORTING HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Liberal Democrats Member for Northern Victoria Tim Quilty has backed a petition asking the Andrews Government to let restaurants and cafes open up fully.

Mr Quilty sponsored an electronic petition presented to Parliament yesterday, which argues the hospitality industry is not a risk to COVID-19 management.

“I am perfectly happy to put my name to this petition because the hospitality industry is an important part of society as well as a key employer, and there is no reason for them not to be able to be running as close to capacity as social distancing measures will allow,” Mr Quilty said.

“The Andrews Government is currently restricting all restaurants in regional Victoria to 10 people per indoor space, up to a maximum of 40 people who must be separated in groups of 10 by permanent structures, while up to 70 are allowed outside.

“In Melbourne, only 20 diners will be allowed inside a venue, with up to 50 outside.

“This is nowhere near good enough: many venues are built to cater to far more than 40 or 50 diners, and it makes no economic sense to run a large venue at less than full capacity.

“This petition will formally request the Premier to reopen the hospitality industry safely – it can be done, but it needs the Melbourne decision-makers to understand how restaurants work and have faith in their ability to operate with hygiene uppermost in their minds.

“Correct me if I’m wrong, but this is what they’ve been doing for years.”

Stuart Eaton, chief executive of petition organisers Change Victoria, has been working with industry figures to draw attention to their situation.

“It took a long time to build Melbourne and Victoria’s reputation as the best place in Australia for dining, drinking with friends, seeing live music and sharing experiences,” Mr Eaton said.

“As the industry begins to re-establish itself, we hope that the Government will improve its interaction with the sector about what is required to allow them to grow.

“The sector isn’t seeking handouts – what it needs is for the Government to listen and consult before they make decisions which have such a wide impact on so many and to give them some certainty so they can take bookings and make plans for what is the busiest time of the year for many in the hospitality sector.

“We hope all Victorians will get back out and support their local venues as soon as they can.”

E-petitions can be created and signed through the Legislative Council e-petition website at <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/council/petitions/electronic-petitions>

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