

ALMR Press Notice

Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers

24th January 2008

ALMR CALLS ON GOVERNMENT TO LISTEN TO THE LORDS ON ADZs

The Government's plans to introduce Alcohol Disorder Zones stood in disarray today, following the publication of a damning report by the House of Lords Merits Committee. The Committee, which scrutinises all draft legislation prior to consideration by the Houses of Parliament, today issued a scathing verdict on the Government's proposed legislation.

Chief Executive, Nick Bish, said:

"This report is a reality check for Ministers. The House of Lords has condemned the regulations as 'unclear' and 'unnecessary' and also called into question the Home Office evidence justifying their introduction – exactly what we have been telling them for months."

He went on:

"The moment when ADZs might have been considered to be a good idea has long since passed and there is no need for them to be imposed at this time. The Government should take a long hard look at its plans, listen to the Lords and abandon these bureaucratic and unhelpful proposals.

-ENDS-

Notes for Editors

- 1. The Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers (ALMR) is the only national trade body dedicated to representing the interests of pub, club, bar and restaurant operators. Its members are predominantly small, independent managed companies and providing their companies with business support and advice. There are currently 76 managed companies in membership, between them operating 4,300 outlets – around 40% of all managed outlets in England and Wales. Of these companies, 80% have an estate of fewer than 50 outlets.*
- 2. The Lords Report is available at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldselect/ldmerit/39/39.pdf>*

Highlights of the Lords Report include:

- "We found the Explanatory Memorandum unclear. Much of the practical detail is in the draft Guidance which was not published with the instrument, which we regard as poor practice. The Committee was left with an impression of a rather bureaucratic system and without a clear idea of how ADZs fit in with the other items in the local authorities' toolkit for combating alcohol-fuelled disorder."
- "We found the EM more of a press notice than a clear explanation of the policy objectives and of how the Regulations contribute to their achievement. Much of the practical detail is in the draft Guidance which was not published at the same time as the instrument, which we regard as poor practice. We understand that it was posted on the Home Office website about a week later."
- On the supporting statistics: "While this claim may be statistically true, the more detailed figures show a rather more complex story, and the Committee questions how robust the Home Office's estimates of the anticipated

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benefits can be if extrapolated from these figures: “based on the experience in Manchester we estimate that ADZs, which would have a greater focus on public space issues, would lead to a reduction in all alcohol-related crimes (including more serious wounding, less serious wounding and common assault) of around 10% over a year.”

- “We were not clear why this policy was required in addition to voluntary measures such as Business Improvement Districts, or enforcement action such as suspending the licences of delinquent bars, or charging delinquent individuals under existing legislation.”
- “Although the policy is optional, given its complexity we wonder how many local authorities will actually take it up, and we draw the Regulations to the special attention of the House on the ground that they may imperfectly achieve their policy objectives.”

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