

ALMR Press Release

ALMR hits out at Parliamentary preference for cars over bars

Tuesday 27 January 2009

Release: Immediate

On the very day the Government hands out a £2 billion rescue package for the ailing automotive industry, Parliamentarians are discussing a new raft of nanny-state measures that could cost British pubs £300 million, jeopardizing thousands of jobs at a time of recession.

Lord Mandelson today announced in the House of Lords that he will free up £2 billion for investment in the car industry. At the same time, a Public Bill Committee led by his ministerial colleagues is discussing the implementation of the new alcohol retail code of practice that forecasts indicate could cost the struggling pub industry £300 million to introduce. 2008 saw the pub closure rate reach a record high of 39 per week at a cost of 17,000 jobs to the economy. Home Office statistics estimate that the annual cost for the code could run to £1195 for every premises, regardless of whether they have links to alcohol induced anti-social behaviour or not.

Nick Bish, Chief Executive of the *ALMR*, commented:

“It beggars belief that on the very day the Government rightly gives job security to one group of UK workers it is pushing proposals that will put the jobs of a much larger group at risk. Britain’s pub and bar industry employs some 580,000 people in the UK. The car industry, by comparison, employs 166,000.

“The costs of the new alcohol code of practice could be the final nail in the coffin for many of the UK’s treasured pubs and bars. With over half a million people relying on the industry as a regular source of income, this will be a tough blow. The Government should be seeking to reassure people as they face the reality of a recession. Now is not the time to be risking jobs by pushing any industry to the brink of collapse with unnecessary and ill thought through legislative proposals.

“We are pushing for the Government to get its act together and show Britain’s pubs and bars a bit of support. The *ALMR* is urging Parliamentarians and Ministers alike to take a reality check and make sure that any mandatory conditions are both targeted and proportionate. We want publicans not only to survive this economic storm, but come out the other side able to build their businesses and thrive once again.”

<<ENDS>>

Notes to Editors

- *ALMR* is the only national trade body solely dedicated to representing the interests of pub and bar operators, and to providing them with business support and advice. It has almost 100 member companies, operating over 15,000 outlets.
- Lord Mandelson announced the new measures for the car industry in Parliament on 27th January 2009. Details can be found here: <http://www.berr.gov.uk/>
- £300 million and the closure rate of 39 pubs per week are figures provided by the BBPA. See: http://www.beerandpub.com/newsList_detail.aspx?newsId=266
- The Policing and Crime Bill Public Bill Committee met on 27 January to take evidence from the alcohol industry on the proposed alcohol retail code of practice, which will be introduced via the Policing and Crime Bill.
- The Regulatory Impact Assessment for the Policing and Crime Bill estimates the new code could cost pubs up to £1195 each per year: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/ia-police-crime-bill-08/ia-alcohol-code-practice?view=Binary>
- The Annual Business Survey 2007 indicates that the car industry employs 166,000 people. The same survey indicates the bar industry employs 584,000.
- For more information, please contact:
- Kate Nicholls: 07938 796 238
- Katie Fuller: 07912024372