

PUB DISMAY AS SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT BACKS SMOKING BAN

The Scottish Beer and Pub Association (SBPA) has expressed dismay at the decision by Members of the Scottish Parliament to support the introduction of a total smoking ban in enclosed public spaces in Scotland next year. The Association believes the ban, which includes pubs and bars, will alienate customers, put at risk thousands of jobs and have a detrimental affect on small business.

Said SBPA Chief Executive, Patrick Browne: "We are deeply disappointed by the Parliament's decision to proceed with a total smoking ban without any concessions for pubs. Scotland's pub industry has been arguing consistently for legislation, which would have created more smoke free areas, given non-smokers more choice and minimised the potential damage to the licensed trade.

"The decision today ignores public opinion, is based on fundamentally flawed research, puts at risk the jobs of thousands of bar workers and may lead to the closure of dozens of community style pubs all across Scotland."

SBPA is seeking an urgent meeting the Scottish Executive Health Minister, Andy Kerr MSP, to try and obtain reassurances on the enforcement of the smoking ban, and confirmation that pubs will be allowed to make provision for smokers outside of their premises where they can.

"If the Scottish Executive wants to ban smoking in enclosed places then it must allow licensees the scope to offer their customers an alternative," continued Mr Browne, "otherwise the negative impact of the smoking ban will be magnified and even more pubs could go out of business."

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Notes for Editors

The Scottish Beer and Pub Association was originally formed in 1906. Members are brewing and large pub companies representing the licensed trade industry in Scotland. The main aim of the Association is to contribute to the economic and social wellbeing of Scotland through employment, investment and training. Members account for 1,500 of the 5,100 licensed public houses in Scotland.

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