



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**CAMPAIGN AGAINST BEER BECOMING 'LIQUID GOLD' COMES TO HOBART**

A national campaign against a crippling hidden tax which will rip \$150million out of people's pockets will come to Hobart today as the city prepares to host its biggest hospitality event in more than two years.

AHA CEO Stephen Ferguson has been in Burnie and Launceston over the last few days meeting with local politicians and punters in pubs to discuss the impact of the Federal Government's tax on draught beer – which went up quietly again last Tuesday.

"Tasmanians join their counterparts on the mainland in paying the fourth highest beer tax in the world," Mr Ferguson said in Hobart today.

"This hidden beer tax – which goes up twice a year – is hitting pub-goers in the hip pocket at a time they can least afford it.

"It means soon we could regularly be seeing schooners costing \$10, with the hidden tax dollars flowing directly to Canberra instead of staying in Tasmanian pockets.

"We are pushing all sides of politics for relief for those in our bars as the cost of living continues to rise on all fronts. This tax needs to be halved – and the sooner the better."

Tasmanian Hospitality Association CEO Steve Old said it was time to give pub-goers a fair go.

"Enough really is enough – pubs and patrons alike have been doing it tough during COVID – we should be encouraging people to safely socialise together once again, not taxing them on one of life's small pleasures," Mr Old said.

"This hidden tax has increased every six months for 35 years – it's nothing but a tax on socialising and has to stop before beer really does become liquid gold."

The campaign, which is strongly backed by the Brewers Association whose CEO John Preston is also in Tasmania, will continue in marginal seats in coming weeks with a political update being provided to more than 500 publicans and industry leaders at tonight's AHA National Awards for Excellence at PW1.

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