



Media Statement

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MEC Ngomane says communities must be involved in issuing liquor licenses

Communities must have a say when it comes to the issuing of liquor licenses to prevent business owners from operating taverns and bottle stores near schools and churches.

This is according to Mpumalanga Community Safety, Security and Liaison MEC Pat Ngomane during a workshop organized for liquor traders in Embalenhle Township yesterday. The township has about 88 taverns operating in the area and some are located closer to places of worshiping and schools.

MEC Ngomane stressed that liquor traders who operate illegally and those who do not comply, their days were over as their taverns will be closed down.

“We understand that this is a business and many families benefit from it. I am also where I am today because I was raised with money made from this business, and my parents operated this business responsibly so; we therefore cannot turn a blind eye from those who want to operate this business outside the scope of the law. We need people who will not look at profit only but responsible business people who will look consider the future and wellbeing of their customers.

We are not here to fight with you but to build with you a crime free and safer road environment. Statistics have shown how much irresponsible liquor consumption has contributed to crime and road crashes, and we can only fight or reduce this if we work together,” he said.

The MEC emphasized that municipalities must put in place by-laws to make it easier for police officers to enforce the law when there is non-compliance from tavern owners. He also added that his office will be open for those with complaints and inputs on liquor trading.

Meanwhile, Moses Magela of Embalenhle Liquor Traders Association said that one of the reasons they have decided to form an association was to correct the way tavern owners were operating. According to Magela, the rate of crime such as domestic violence, rape and assault emanating from the abuse of alcohol was a matter of concern to them.

“We are not happy with the rate of criminal activities happening within our premises, we do not want our business to be associated with negativity therefore we will work together with government and the police to make sure that there is compliance from all traders and that our operating premises and surroundings are safe. We have seen and heard about people who became victims of abuse due to liquor in our areas and we say enough is enough,” he said.

He added that they would like to see a situation where government created a platform in a form of a summit for traders in the whole province, attended by members of associations where they will come

up with regulations that will guide them as traders to promote responsible trading and also to create a crime free environment.

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Enquiries: Joseph Mabuza

Tel: (013) 766 1575

Mobile: 082 678 1450

E-mail: emabuza@mpg.gov.za