Budget 2014 - Parliamentary Motion Urging A Freeze In Beer Tax Is Now Most Popular Tax Campaign, As 100 Mps Back Call

Tuesday 4 March, 2014

Calls for a freeze in beer tax in the Budget now have more support than any other tax measure among early day motions (EDMs) signed by MPs, as the number supporting has reached 100.

The milestone follows a strong campaign from Britain's pubs and brewers, the British Beer and Pub Association, CAMRA and SIBA, which includes the publication of a new report showing that 900,000 jobs depend on beer and pubs - and almost half (44%) are younger workers aged 16-24, who need job these vital jobs the most.

The report, by economic experts Oxford Economics for the British Beer & Pub Association, also finds that the industry pays out £11 billion in wages, and adds £22 billion to the economy. Brewing itself sustains 80,000 UK jobs, but it is in pubs where the jobs impact is most felt, with 820,000 jobs. The industry also spends over £1 billion in capital investment, and pays an astonishing £12 billion in total taxes.

Andrew Griffiths MP, the Burton MP and chairman of the all party Parliamentary Beer Group, who has spearheaded the campaign in Parliament, comments:

"The Chancellor's cut in beer duty last year was a historic, confidence-building measure for this vital sector. But with beer tax having risen by 42 per cent over the previous five years, more action is needed. It will take many years to undo the damage and at the very least, a freeze is needed. At very little cost, the Chancellor can protect 2,400 jobs in a great British industry. It is a win-win situation."

Brigid Simmonds, BBPA Chief Executive, adds:

"I want to thank MPs of all parties for their tremendous support. For all those campaigning in our industry, there is still time to ask your own MP to help the campaign, or highlight the importance of beer and pubs in your own area, using our Oxford Economics Impact Report."

-Ends-

Notes to Editors:

1. Those wishing to write to their MP can do so via the CAMRA website here.

2. The BBPA's Oxford Economics report is available here.

3. For a pdf version of the new joint BBPA, SIBA, CAMRA, Pubs of Ulster 'Beer Story - Fact s on Tap' leaflet and infographics, click here.

4. UK beer duty - key facts:

- The beer and pub sector supports over 900,000 jobs, 46 per cent of which are held by 16-24 year olds.
- Beer and pubs contribute £22 billion to UK GDP and generate £12 billion in total tax revenue.
- 82 per cent of the beer sold in Britain is made here in Britain.
- 1 job in brewing generates 1 job in agriculture, 1 in the supply chain, 1 in retailing and 18 in pubs.
- From 2008 to 2013, beer tax increased by 42 per cent, with beer sales down 21 per cent, 7,000 pubs closing, and 58,000 UK jobs lost.
- A beer duty freeze in 2014/15 would cost the Treasury just £4 million, according to Oxford Economics.
- Beer duty rates in the UK are still among the highest of any country in Europe.

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