Alcohol (Minimum Pricing) (Scotland) Bill

Tennent Caledonian Breweries UK

As Scotland’s pre-eminent brewer, Tennent Caledonian is committed to Scotland and we take our responsibilities as a brewer seriously. We are therefore pleased to participate in the consultation process relating to the proposed introduction of alcohol minimum pricing in Scotland.

A recent study by Oxford Economics (for the British Beer and Pubs Association) found that the sector sustains 49,960 direct jobs in Scotland and 71,093 in total when indirect and induced jobs are included. Tennent Caledonian employs directly 311 staff. The business supplies its products to more than 7,500 on-trade customers and 98% of off-trade outlets in Scotland.

Tennent Caledonian’s commitment to Scotland is evidenced in the level of investment that has been made here in Scotland by the business since its acquisition by C&C Group plc in 2009. This has included:

- Over 50 jobs brought to Wellpark Brewery in Glasgow’s East End, primarily in accounting, IT and finance;
- The launch and expansion of the Tennent’s Training Academy aimed at promoting best practice in the Scottish hospitality industry;
- Ongoing support for the Scottish licensed trade through loans, representing a seven figure investment in the past two months alone, at a time when small businesses have found it difficult to raise financial support elsewhere;
- The launch of Caledonia Best – a new 3.2% ABV ale, brewed in Glasgow using barley sourced only from Scottish farmers;
- Tennent’s ongoing support for Scottish football through its sponsorship Scotland’s two most popular clubs, Celtic and Rangers – continuing Tennent’s support for Scotland’s most watched sport;
- The successful and on-going Tennent’s brand advertising campaign, conceived in Scotland and built around and highlighting Tennent’s Scottish heritage;
- A renewed focus on export, with Tennent’s Lager now being sold in Australia and Canada;
- A £3.4m investment in a bottling line at Wellpark Brewery, bringing bottling capability back to Scotland.

Furthermore, Tennent Caledonian plays a leading and active role in the Scottish Government’s Alcohol Industry Partnership, of which we are a founding member, and adheres to all the relevant regulatory and advisory codes around the marketing of alcohol in any activity that we undertake. We are members of Portman Group and Drinkaware. Tennent Caledonian has for many years promoted responsible drinking in our advertising; our promotions and our sponsorships.
Nonetheless, we recognise that there is an issue with the abuse of alcohol by a minority of consumers in Scotland and that the Scottish Government has a role to play in tackling this. As such, Tennent Caledonian welcomes sensible moves to ensure that alcohol is enjoyed appropriately here in Scotland.

In principle, we support the Scottish Government’s proposals to introduce minimum pricing measures for alcohol as long as:

- minimum pricing is introduced as one of a range of measures aimed at tackling this issue;
- these measures are implemented fairly and proportionately.

We believe that, implemented correctly, minimum pricing may help reduce the abuse of alcohol by the minority of problem drinkers. However, we strongly believe that this measure must be supplemented with an ongoing focus on education and information for drinkers on the issues associated with alcohol abuse.

Furthermore, while we do not seek to advocate a specific price for minimum unit pricing, we believe it is vital that this is set at a level that is proportionate to the issue that this measure seeks to address. While we recognise that setting a price that is too low may have little effect on the issue that it seeks to address, we also urge the Scottish Government to recognise that setting a price that is too high will penalise the vast majority of responsible drinkers who enjoy the consumption of alcohol at a moderate and wholly appropriate level.

In summary, Tennent Caledonian believes passionately that responsible adults have the right to enjoy drinking sensibly and that minimum pricing may contribute to fostering a responsible drinking culture in Scotland.

Steve Annand
Managing Director
Tennent Caledonian Breweries UK Limited
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