

Colin Holt MLC  
Minister for Housing, Racing and Gaming  
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Dear Mr Holt,

**RE: REMOVAL OF REBATE SCHEME – WINE EQUALISATION TAX (WET)**

The Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association (AMRTA) is a self-funded, not-for-profit membership based organization, representing more than 820 local businesses in The Margaret River Region's tourism and hospitality sector.

In addition to our representation of these local tourism operators, we are also responsible for high quality, award-winning visitor servicing through our Visitor Information Centres located in the towns of Busselton, Dunsborough, Augusta and Margaret River. Through these centres and our various cave and lighthouse attractions throughout the region, we come into contact with over 1,000,000 of the visitors who visit this region annually.

We understand that there are significant changes proposed in the recently released state budget which will considerably affect the tourism industry in our region and we wish to explain this impact in further detail.

We have recently been contacted by a number of our tourism members, greatly concerned about the potential for the removal of the WET rebate to negatively influence their businesses which are heavily reliant on the wine industry.

While we understand that on paper the impact of the abolishment of this scheme appears minimal, we understand adequate consultation has not been made with the wine industry directly affected by these changes. We would like to voice our support for a 12 month moratorium on this decision as proposed by Larry Jorgensen, CEO of Wines of Western Australia. This moratorium would allow the industry to review the changes and provide accurate data on the impact of the scheme as proposed, as well as provide comment on potential improvements to the scheme to limit negative effects on those aforementioned businesses.

As you know, the wine industry is a core aspect of tourism in Western Australia and no more than in our own Margaret River Region. Regional wine producers make up only a portion of the wine industry in this region and we do not believe that this decision has taken into account the hundreds of tourism operators including wine tour companies and wineries with functional cellar doors, all of which will feel the weight of this decision which appears to affect only 19 Margaret River businesses when in fact we believe this will have a far wider impact.

We appreciate your consideration of this proposal and look forward to a harmonious and productive outcome for all parties.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pip Close", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Pip Close  
Chief Executive Officer

