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Sent: Thursday, 14 July 2011 4:00 PM
To: Committee, HAA (REPS)
Subject: Sub 008: Plain Packaging Legislation

Submission No. 8 (Plain Packaging Bill) A.O.C. Date: 18/07/2011
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Importance: High

I currently work within the tobacconist retail channel and am a Non-Smoker. I was taught, by a parent who was a smoker that enjoyed the Experience and the freedom of choice, that smoking was not a good habit to take up.

As a retail professional, the proposed legislation on plain packaging will only affect how the retailer has to operate their businesses- the consumer will still smoke if they choose to.

The legislation enacted by state governments to cover up displays and smoking areas in Pubs, Clubs and Restaurants has had a greater effect on the influence that peripheral tobacco sightings in the wider public area have, than plain packaging will ever hope to achieve in the public arena.

I firmly believe that the plain packaging will only increase the criminal element in the tobacco sector.

If we, as a society have a problem with illegal drugs as seen on television on a regular basis, then the plain packaging legislation will only provide a greater opportunity for the criminal elements to thrive and prosper.

As is the case now, there is a very big market for the sales of illegal tobacco and this legislation will only feed this and encourage it to multiply.

The Federal Government were on the right plan to increase the pricing and get all state governments to the same place.

With regard, the non visual of tobacco should attack the retail environment that sells the illegal tobacco- the more retailers understand that if they sell illegal tobacco, the cost to their livelihood is significant and the cost to them and their businesses.

The likely scenario is that there will be fewer locations for the sale of illegal tobacco.

The government has a responsibility to act for all - not just the ones with the loudest voice, and this legislation will only encourage the unsavoury element of society.

The commonsense approach should take place and keep tobacco prices high and out of sight in the retail environment thus saving a lot of money in court cases where the only winners are the law firms they represent tobacco companies and the Australian taxpayer.

Regards,

John McGarry