



To whom it may concern

Re submission in favor of the alcohol reduction bill as below:

On 14 February 2008 the Senate, on the recommendation of the Selection of Bills Committee, has referred the above Bill to the Committee for inquiry and report by 18 June 2008.

The Bill aims to create a culture of responsible drinking, and to facilitate a reduction in the alcohol toll resulting from excessive alcohol consumption. To achieve this aim the Bill will:

- Require health information labels on all alcohol products;
- Restrict TV and radio alcohol advertising to after 9pm and before 5am, to stop alcohol being marketed to young people;
- Require all alcohol ads to be pre-approved by a government body comprising an expert from the medical profession, alcohol and drug support sector, accident trauma support sector and the alcohol industry;
- Ban alcohol ads which are aimed at children or which link drinking to personal, business, social, sporting, sexual or other success.

Dear Ms/Sir

I write to support the alcohol reduction bill going through the House later this year.

I am writing as a private citizen and indigenous Australian and will leave the Cape York Institute's official response to our Director Mr Noel Pearson, who I am sure is as concerned as I about the issue, having followed and supported his philosophies on 'rebuilding social norms for Cape York communities' via the Higher Expectations secondary scholarship Program.

As an mature indigenous citizen I have had much first-hand experience in the adverse affects of alcohol abuse in my direct and extended family and in many and various employments I have worked in where alcohol has been at the base foundation of many of the frustrations that I and my professional colleagues have faced in education, health and life success for my people.

Although not a teetotaller, I have become very much more aware of the affects of alcohol advertising working against the very education and awareness information that we constantly give to our youth and families. I have had youth tell me alcohol is 'not a real drug' or 'not a dangerous drug like cocaine or heroin' and have learned that is because of the false and misleading position it holds in the Australian psyche.

For instance: 'we' do alcohol awareness workshops and the youth then go home and see TV ads that influence our youth to drink so they can be more "Australian" and have the virtual "fun" that this will cause to happen as well.



I believe that the 'lie' that has been perpetuated that alcohol is not a drug (see how many 'health' conferences explain that it is a drug and alcohol conference), has begun to hurt our society and is something we will look back on in ten years time and ask ourselves why we took so long to change the perception and awareness in our society.

Alcohol abuse and social elevation of alcohol product is a major danger to indigenous advancement in Australia and in many other parts of the world and the sooner we indigenous professionals in Australia have the backing of our Government in genuine education and awareness supported by the four points contextualised in the upcoming bill, the sooner we will see real change in the abuse and the extolling of its seemingly 'real' advertised benefits.

At present it is impossible to create any real headway in this area with no support for our constructive information from dependable sources.

I urge you to do the 'maths', look to our common future and to do the 'right' thing in this matter and although I understand the various alcohol product companies have rights also, I would urge you to look to our combined positive and healthy future for all Australians and lead the world in this important and 'ethical' decision.

As you would understand and to belabour the obvious, this bill and the current debate around it is not to stop alcohol altogether; but to give all our citizens the correct and timely information to make good life-style decisions that will benefit our whole country in our future in much the same manner that the world has come to agree on in the smoking/nicotine issue.

Thanks for your time

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