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Competition Policy Review Secretariat
The Treasury
Langton Crescent
PARKES ACT 2600

Submission from the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth

We make this submission to the Competition Policy Review on behalf of the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth.

We would like to register the McCusker Centre's support for the submission of the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA) to the current review. Consistent with the NAAA's position, we recognise that alcohol should not be treated as an ordinary commodity due to its potential to cause a wide range of health and social harms. This position is supported by Professor Sir Ian Gilmore, Chair of the UK Alcohol Health Alliance and former President of the Royal College of Physicians of London:

"We have to accept...that 'alcohol is not an ordinary commodity'. If it is left to personal choice as an entirely libertarian issue, we will run into problems. It is a drug. It is a drug of dependence. It is a psychoactive drug. It happens to be legal. We do not want to make it illegal, but it does require different handling from soap powder and other things that may be dealt with otherwise by the free market."

[From the Report of the Independent Review Committee regarding the WA Liquor Control Act 1988, December 2013, page 7]

In the interests of public health, it is essential to preserve the ability of governments to impose appropriate controls on the economic and physical availability of alcohol, even where these controls may otherwise be seen to limit competition.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Mike Daube AO *MJD*
Director, McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth