

20 July, 2011

Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Health and Ageing
House of Representatives
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Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
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Submission No. 23
(Plain Packaging Bill)
A.O.C. Date: 20/07/2011

Dear Committee Secretary

We are writing as the Heads of the four major Schools of Public Health in Victoria to lend you our strongest support for your legislation to require the plain packaging of cigarettes.

Cigarette smoking is one of the most significant contributors to premature death and disability in the Australian community.

The attitude of cigarette manufacturers who create a powerful addiction amongst teenagers and then promote their 'right to smoke' is cynical.

Australia has lead the way in controlling the dangers of cigarette smoking, but still one in six of our population is smoking regularly.

These individuals typically take up the habit when they are young but pay the price when they are supporting a family and have most to lose.

If it were not for the powerful addicting effect of cigarettes, most individuals would probably stop smoking at a relatively early age. However a strong addictive compulsion drives them to continue, which creates a major health risk for them and a danger to those who live with them.

The plain packaging legislation is a significant step which will be watched internationally. It emphasises the intention of the Australian parliament to limit the damage from smoking and protect the health of both smokers and non-smokers.

We urge you to stand firm in support of this legislation and congratulate you on your leadership in promoting and protecting the health of the Australian population.

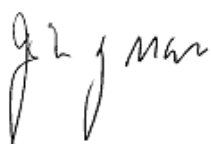
Yours sincerely



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