

Sent: Thursday, 21 July 2011 9:50 AM
To: Committee, HAA (REPS)
Subject: Sub 028: Letter to Parliamentary Committee

Submission No. 28 (Plain Packaging Bill) A.O.C. Date: 21/07/2011

Dear Committee Members,

I am a small importer of Premium Cigars (Wet Cigars) and I understand the Government's concerns about cigarettes. I urge you to consider in this Legislation the seven small cigar retailers who have brick and mortar stores and are all responsible cigar retailers. We are different to the cigarette market and could not afford to comply with all the plain packaging requirements of cigarettes.

To cover a cigar box like a cigarette packet, we have probably 500 different shapes and sizes industry wide, does not seem to me to be a practicable solution.

To remove the cigar band is also not possible as most cigar bands are joined with vegetable gum and upon removal would fracture the fine outer tobacco wrapper and render the cigar useless. We also sell most cigars as single cigars and it would not be possible for the customer to identify one cigar from another.

I am not aware of all the Legislature on cigars as the draft Legislation is more specific to cigarettes.

I am emailing this to you from Las Vegas, where I am currently attending the Annual Cigar Convention, and I have been able to speak to my suppliers. They will not supply me with cigars with no bands and I cannot remove them. I believe that the minister has stated that there will be minimal cost to stake holders re plain packaging but in my case, it will devastate my business.

I beg you to consider Premium Cigars as something different in your determinations.

I remain

Yours Faithfully

Ray Battistella

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