

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 14 February 2011 2:02 PM
To: Committee, SPLA (REPS)
Subject: Billboards - Inquiry into the regulation of billboard and outdoor advertising

Submission No: 15
Date Received: 15-2-11

Dear Committee

I received a letter from my local Councillor advising me that there is to be a Federal Committee Inquiry into the Regulation of Billboard and Outdoor Advertising, and I appreciate being given the opportunity to make a submission addressing the terms of reference in this matter.

Whenever one of those "inappropriate" billboard advertisements is displayed, our local newspaper is invariably inundated with letters to the editor about the blatant advertising of certain adult sex products, which are clearly seen by everyone who passes by. This includes pre school and school aged children, as well as many senior citizens. Most of these large billboards can be clearly see for quite a distance, especially along the M1 motorway - to and from Brisbane and the Gold Coast. There are several child care centres, schools and retirement villages situated along the motorway and which are situated in full view of these large billboard advertising signs. Unfortunately the majority of people who are forced to see these billboards when passing them by each day are adults and children who simply do not need to have such blatant advertising thrust in their faces every day.

In a letter to the editor that I wrote to my local newspaper in June 2008, the letter was headed: *Remove inappropriate billboard from students' view* - an extract of that letter which appears below:

"This billboard had also been displayed in a prominent area in (my local area) late last year (2007), which not only faced the northbound traffic along the M1 motorway, but also the traffic along the service road, including the local school buses. Needless to say, the subject of sex suddenly became the hot topic among the primary school children, my young daughter included. Admittedly it did bring forward the sex talk, but I would have much preferred to have approached that subject under more pleasant circumstances, rather than having had the issue of sex thrust in our faces, so to speak, every day while travelling to school, on a huge billboard.

For example, how do you explain to a young child that the subject of sex is a private matter between the people concerned, when the subject itself is so blatantly advertised in huge red letters on a billboard?

I would like to know just how these people, who are advertising such a personal and private product, can be allowed to blatantly display this product on such a huge billboard in a public place, when it is already advertised throughout newspapers and on the radio - constantly?"

Despite the fact that this particular adult product advertisement was eventually removed, it has since been replaced several times over, and for approximately three (3) months at a time. It is also ironic that this particular advertisement is always replaced on the same billboards just before the re-commencement of the new school year - or at the beginning of a new school term - right where all the school buses pass by - five days a week, and where families also drive past seven days a week - in full view of everyone - young and old.

I would certainly like to see a more stricter regulation on this and other newer and more blatant adult sex product advertisements that are now being displayed once again, such as in less prominent places and in less prominent size, such as the back pages of newspapers or appropriate magazines, where they are not so likely to be see by everyone, but only by those who are perhaps looking for that particular advertisement.

Thank you for your time, and I hope that a regulation is eventually put in place when it comes to advertising certain adult/sex products.

Heather Golding

