

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 13 & 15 February 2013

Question: E13-128

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: Tobacco - National Class Action Lawsuit

Type of Question: Hansard Page 25, 13 February 2013

Senator: Senator Fierravanti-Wells

Question:

- a) Has the Minister for Health sought, received and circulated this advice?
- b) If it has not been, could you tell me why it has not been please?
- c) Can you tell me what is the nature of the advice and what action, if any is the government investigating in relation to this advice?

Answer:

- a) Following requests by state and territory health ministers, in July 2012 the Minister for Health, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, wrote to the then Attorney-General, the Hon Nicola Roxon MP, seeking her advice in regard to investigating the proposal to litigate against tobacco companies.

The new Attorney-General, the Hon Mark Dreyfus QC MP, wrote to Minister Plibersek with advice on this issue on 12 April 2013.

As agreed by the Attorney-General, the response will be provided to state and territory health ministers in due course.

- b) The advice was received by Minister Plibersek on 15 April 2013.
- c) The response indicates that litigation to seek recovery of health care expenditure on tobacco related diseases is primarily a matter for the states and territories to consider.