



**Government  
of South Australia**

08MHE/5340

Committee Secretary  
Community Affairs Committee  
Department of the Senate  
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CANBERRA ACT 2600

**Minister for Health  
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Dear Committee Secretary

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Inquiry into Protecting Children from Junk Food Advertising (Broadcasting Amendment) Bill 2008 (the Bill). The South Australian Government is very concerned about this issue.

The prevention of obesity is a priority for South Australia. Latest figures reveal that one in five South Australian four-year olds are either overweight or obese. The implications of this are serious, not only for individuals, but for our communities, the health system and the State's economy. Overweight is associated with a range of chronic conditions, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease and can also contribute to poor mental health through social isolation, loss of self esteem, discrimination and depression. South Australia has a number of strategies in place to curb the growing obesity crisis.

In February 2008, South Australia called for junk food and drink advertisers to voluntarily withdraw their advertisements from children's television viewing times or the State would consider taking its own action. South Australia's preference would be for such a withdrawal to occur nationally and for the industries involved to take their own action. South Australia has however, sought legal advice on the introduction of a South Australian ban and has been advised that it can pursue the introduction of its own legislation if required.

On 29 August 2008, South Australia released a consultation paper inviting food, advertising and broadcasting industries, community groups and members of the public to submit proposals regarding the influence of television advertising on children's nutrition in South Australia. The consultation paper seeks proposals for meaningful and significant suggestions to reduce or eliminate marketing of unhealthy food and drinks to children. A copy of South Australia's consultation paper has been provided for your information. South Australia has invited written responses to the paper to be forwarded to SA Health by 31 October 2008.

South Australia acknowledges that a concerted effort by many is needed to halt this major public health issue. Reversing the problem requires a coordinated and collaborative approach involving all levels of Government, as well as non-Government organisations, communities and individuals. As industry needs to be part of the solution, South Australia welcomes open and robust dialogue with this stakeholder group.

South Australia's consultation paper has made a number of suggestions about how advertising restrictions could be applied to food and drinks in relation to children. These include the restriction of advertising during designated children's programming, as proposed by the Bill. South Australia supports the Bill's exception of community service announcements regarding food and beverages being made in these timeslots. South Australia has already introduced a ban on junk food sold in canteens and vending machines in State schools.

Yours sincerely



**MINISTER FOR HEALTH**

Date: 22.10.08