



Submission No. 48
(Plain Packaging Bill)
A.O.C. Date: 26/07/2011

Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Health and Ageing
House of Representatives
PO Box 6021, Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
haa.reps@aph.gov.au

22 July 2011

Dear Committee Secretary,

We write to commend all major parliamentary parties for supporting the introduction of mandatory plain packaging of tobacco products sold in Australia. We urge all members of the House of Representatives to convert this multi-partisan support into action by passing the Tobacco Plain Packaging Bill 2011 and the Trade Marks Amendment (Tobacco Plain Packaging) Bill 2011 in the next session of Parliament.

The case for ending this powerful form of tobacco advertising is set out in our earlier submission to the public consultation - see www.ashaust.org.au/pdfs/PlainPxASHsubm1106.pdf - along with many other submissions from leading health authorities in Australia and internationally, including the World Health Organization. In particular we endorse the submissions of the Protecting Children from Tobacco coalition and the joint submission from the Cancer Council Australia, Heart Foundation, Quit Victoria and ourselves.

Compelling independent research – summarised in the evidence review by Quit Victoria dating back more than 20 years at <http://bit.ly/jmWu36> - confirms that plain packaging is likely to reduce the appeal of smoking to teenagers and adults, make packet health warning messages more prominent, and stop smokers incorrectly believing that some brands of tobacco are less harmful than others.

The only opposition to this legislation is from multi-national tobacco companies and related third parties who profit direct or indirectly from the sale and promotion of addictive, lethal tobacco products. For decades the tobacco industry has interfered in public health by engaging in deceptive and misleading conduct to increase their profits. This industry, including retailers, systematically uses its political and monetary influence to deny, delay and defer legislation to reduce tobacco diseases and deaths.

The latest tactics of the tobacco industry include: multi-million dollar mass media campaigns attacking government policies as “nanny state”; threats to flood the country with cheap cigarettes and sue the government for billions; and alarming materials preying on the fears of retailers by falsely claiming that plain packaging will create confusion, security risks, generate counterfeits, job losses and “next could be food and drink” (attached below).

We strongly object to the tobacco industry’s aggressive interference in health policies and urge members to resist any industry attempts to delay or water down this legislation that is a crucial part of the national tobacco control strategy to reach the goal of having 10% or less of the population smoking by 2018.

Our first submission on plain packaging was to the Senate Inquiry into the Tobacco Industry and the Costs of Tobacco-related Illness in 1994 – nearly twenty years ago. There is no valid reason for any further delay, which would only continue to expose both children and adults to this powerful form of tobacco advertising.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Jones OAM
Chief Executive Officer
Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) Australia

Attachment (below): Imperial flyer to retailers July 2011



A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO SAY "NO" TO PLAIN PACKAGING

Dear Trading Partner,

Imperial Tobacco Australia (ITA) thanks those retailers who answered the call and lodged a submission to the Federal Government, expressing their view on the draft Tobacco Plain Packaging Bill.

On Wednesday 6 July 2011, the Minister for Health introduced the Tobacco Plain Packaging Bill 2011 ("the Bill") into the House of Representatives. The following day, the Bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Health and Ageing for inquiry, providing another opportunity for interested parties to tell the government what they think of Plain Packaging.

The Committee is likely to report back to Parliament within a short number of weeks with recommendations. Debate on the Bill will resume in the House of Representatives in the Spring Sitting commencing 16 August 2011.

There is still time for you to have your say. The timeframe to make submissions on the Bill is by 22 July 2011.

ITA encourages all tobacco retailers to prepare a submission on the Bill, voicing their concerns on Plain Packaging. When sending your submission, you may choose to include views such as those shown on the back of this card.

You can post or email a submission. Submissions must be received by the Standing Committee on Health and Ageing by Friday 22 July 2011, but don't delay as the sooner they are sent in the better.

By email: haa.reps@aph.gov.au

By mail: Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Health and Ageing
House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

For further information regarding the Bill and preparation of submissions, please refer to the website below:
<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/haa/billtobaccopackage/index.htm>



A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO SAY "NO" TO PLAIN PACKAGING

You can make a difference by sending a submission to the Standing Committee on Health and Ageing to voice your concerns. When sending your submission, you may choose to include views such as:

- There is no evidence anywhere in the world that plain packs will work
- If cigarettes are not on display, plain packaging does not make sense and is bureaucracy gone mad
- Plain packaging is confusing for retailers and customers
- Plain packaging will increase transaction times, security risks and the likelihood of customers receiving the wrong product
- Plain packaging will make counterfeiting even easier. I follow the law, but I have to compete with retailers selling cheap cigarettes in counterfeit packaging
- The government is already losing \$1.1 bn annually in excise that is not collected on illicit tobacco products sold in Australia. Every dollar of excise lost is a dollar that must be raised from Australians through another tax.
- The government wants plain packaging of cigarettes. Next could be food and drink. Where will it stop?
- Plain packaging takes away the right of consumers to choose between legal products
- Send an email to submissions@au.imptob.com to automatically receive back an electronic copy of these above points for you to personalise and then submit to the email address on the front of this card.

If you have any questions, contact ITA Customer Service on 1300 308 208