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Sent: Thursday, 21 July 2011 2:50 PM
To: Committee, HAA (REPS)
Subject: Sub 025: Plain Packaging

Submission No. 25
(Plain Packaging Bill)
A.O.C. Date: 25/07/2011

Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Health & Ageing
House of Representatives

Submission from Keith W Spicer
[REDACTED]

Dear Sir's,

As a retailer in a small town I rely on tobacco sales for almost 40% of my gross income, from which the meagre profit funds the wages of a permanent part time employee who would other wise be on Social Security Benefits. Without the assistance of this part time worker I would not be able to keep this shop open and the local community would suffer as a result. The nearest major centre is 28km away.

I would also like to bring to the Committee's attention the following points :

1. Plain packaging will cause confusion and disagreements for both customers and sales staff.
2. The size of the current "Graphic Images" has not discouraged smoking as people choose the least disturbing images on the packets that they buy. So increasing the size of the image will not succeed either.
3. If people find the images disturbing enough they will simply buy covers or packets to put their cigarettes in, as they did when these images were first introduced and this lasted until they became indifferent to them.
4. As a now Ex-smoker of 44 years and a strong willed person, I know that smoking is an addictive habit that an individual can only deal with in their own way when they are ready. It is not something that can be forced or coerced on people.
5. Even discouraging young people from taking up smoking would be very difficult due mainly to "Peer Pressure" which I am sure will circumvent the proposed "Plain Packaging " law.
6. The Government may do better if it made a serious attempt at enforcing the existing laws as young people under 18 years of age are consistently supplied with tobacco products by adults such as parents, grand parents and siblings. This situation is witnessed frequently in the main street and commented on but nobody takes any action.

In closing I would like to say that the proposed plain packaging of cigarettes is a ridicules attempt to solve the smoking problem which may be solved by education but it won't happen in the short term, it will no doubt take decades.

Also can you imagine what the reaction would be if this law was applied to the other two major health hazards ie. alcohol and obesity. Imagine plain label beer, wine and spirits or better still plain wrap KFC, Mc Donalds and Eagle Boy's Pizza.

PLAIN LABELLING IS A QUICK FIX and IT WON'T WORK.

Yours Respectfully,

Keith W. Spicer