

40th Anniversary 1971 - 2011

**ACOSH**

Australian Council on Smoking and Health



**12 October 2011**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **SENATE URGED TO PASS HISTORIC TOBACCO PLAIN PACKAGING LEGISLATION TODAY**

Leading public health advocates are calling on the Senate to pass Australia's historic Tobacco Plain Packaging legislation without any further delays.

The Tobacco Plain Packaging Bill 2011 is currently being debated in the Senate.

Australian Council on Smoking and Health (ACOSH) President Professor Mike Daube said, "So far 17 Senate members are listed to speak – which could mean several hours of scarce Senate debating time, and delays until the next sitting days in November.

"Since the Government announced its intention to implement plain packaging in April 2010 we have had 18 months of discussions, debates and consultations.

"This is world-leading, life-saving legislation. It is time to stop talking and act now so that the Bill goes through without any delays."

Leading tobacco control campaigner Professor Simon Chapman, Professor of Public Health at Sydney University said, "The Bill has been supported by all sides of politics, despite frantic and desperate lobbying from global tobacco companies.

"We recognise that Senators are entitled to speak, but we urge them to keep their comments brief, so that the Bill can be passed today.

"The choice is simple: should a carcinogen-rich product which kills half of those who use it continue to be sold in attractive, market-researched packs designed to make smokers feel good about smoking, or should they be packaged at least as plainly as prescribed drugs are, which come in dull boxes – and are designed to promote health."

Melanie Walker, Acting CEO of the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) said, "This vital public health legislation has been debated endlessly in all media. All parties have pledged to support it, so there can be no justification for delay, or to give further house-room to tobacco industry arguments. We urge all Senators to ensure that it is passed today, so that action to implement plain packaging can start as speedily as possible."

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