

26 April 2009

ALCOPOPS: TIME FOR A SOLUTION

One year on PHAA calls for Senate to see that the measure continues

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) is calling on all parties in the Senate to ensure the new alcopops tax measures are delivered. A year ago - on 27 April 2008 - the government announced the plan as part of a program to tackle binge drinking and particularly the way that young teenagers are introduced to drinking alcohol.

The only real opposition for the measures is from the distilling industry. It is no wonder with the success of the measure indicated by alcopops consumption (on ATO figures) being down by 35% and overall spirits by 8%.

CEO of the PHAA, Michael Moore reminded all Members of Parliament that “all the community health groups that appeared before the Senate Inquiry were unanimous in their view that the tax loophole should be closed in the framework of a comprehensive policy designed to reduce harmful and hazardous use of alcohol.”

“With the impending reintroduction of the alcopops tax it is now time for Senators to take stock, seek compromise and work together to ensure success of the tax measure. The focus should be reducing the numbers of teenage girls who are introduced to alcohol by these sweet, sugary drinks specifically designed to mask the taste of alcohol,” Mr Moore said.

“We are keen to see Family First Senator Steve Fielding working closely with the Greens and Independent Senator Nick Xenophon to establish a single cross-bench position to put to government so that the measure will be able to pass the Senate. This position should include further ways to challenge the nexus between sport and alcohol advertising.

“Along with support for the Alcopops tax we encourage action to curb alcohol promotion, to introduce effective health warnings, to run public education campaigns and to develop systems to use alcohol tax revenue to replace sports sponsorship”, he added.

For further information/comment:

Michael Moore, CEO of the PHAA
Professor Mike Daube President, PHAA

0417 249 731
0409 933 933