



FAMILY FIRST



Steve Fielding Family First Senator for Victoria

MEDIA RELEASE

SF/258. Thursday February 14, 2008

SENATE INQUIRY TO GIVE AUSTRALIANS A SAY ON BINGE DRINKING

Family First is claiming a victory for Australian families today with the Senate agreeing to an inquiry into tough legislation to cut Australia's alcohol toll.

Family First leader Senator Steve Fielding said for the first time Australians would be able to have their say on the country's alcohol problem.

The statistics on binge drinking are horrifying:

- 450,000 children under 12 are at risk of being exposed to binge drinking in their home by a parent or other adult, according to the Australian National Council on Drugs;
- 35 per cent of Australians drink at levels that risk short-term harm and 10 per cent at levels that risk long-term harm, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare;
- Alcohol causes almost 4,300 deaths each year;
- Alcohol is responsible for 40 per cent of police work and is still a factor in up to one in five road deaths; and
- The annual cost of the alcohol toll is estimated at \$7.6 billion.

“Social drinking is fine, but we must change our culture that celebrates binge drinking. Family First wants to create a responsible drinking culture in our country

“There's no measuring the number of families, relationships and communities it damages. Family First wants the government to take tough action to reduce our alcohol toll, and a Senate inquiry is the first step.”

Family First's *Alcohol Toll Reduction Bill 2007* has been referred to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs for report by 18 June 2008. Senator Fielding urged Australian families to have their say by making a submission to the inquiry.

Family First's *Alcohol Toll Reduction Bill 2007* would:

- Require health information labels on all alcohol products;
- Ensure all alcohol advertising is pre-approved by a government body rather than the existing industry self-regulation; and
- Ensure television alcohol advertising runs after 9pm to stop the marketing of alcohol to young people or which link drinking to personal, business, social, sporting, sexual or other success.

For media enquiries phone 0409 550 446

www.stevefielding.com.au