



FAMILY FIRST



Steve Fielding Family First Senator for Victoria

MEDIA RELEASE

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SHOULD ALCOHOL ADVERTISING LAWS BE EXTENDED TO THE INTERNET?

Family First today called for submissions to the Senate inquiry on its alcohol bill to examine whether the laws should also be extended to internet advertising.

"Alcohol companies are increasingly turning to the internet for advertising, so the question is whether Family First's legislation to regulate alcohol advertising should be broadened to include internet advertising?" Family First leader Steve Fielding said today.

"The Advertising Standards Bureau is an industry body that cannot enforce its decisions, and we know that companies like the marketer of Bondi Blonde beer have ignored their rulings on internet advertising.

"Senate inquiries are a great way to canvas opinion on laws, to make sure they are as effective as possible. Family First wants to change our culture from a binge drinking culture to a responsible drinking culture."

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. Submissions close at the end of the week, on Thursday, 20 March 2008.

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.

"As a nation we have tackled our road toll, our drug toll and our tobacco toll with success," Senator Fielding said. "It's great that we have now started to get tough on booze and tackle our alcohol toll – as alcohol kills three times more Australians than all illicit drugs combined."

The statistics on Australia's alcohol toll are horrifying:

- There is a net loss to the Australian economy of around \$7 billion dollars pa (as it costs Australia \$15.3 billion dollars mopping after excessive alcohol and alcohol tax revenue is \$8 billion);
- 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; and
- Alcohol is responsible for 40 per cent of police work and is still a factor in up to one in five road deaths.

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