



# FAMILY FIRST



Steve Fielding **Family First** Senator for Victoria

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **LOST LIVES, LOST HEALTH, LOST PRODUCTIVITY But the \$15.3 billion alcohol toll is not a lost cause**

Now that the Federal Government has acknowledged the enormity of the \$15.3 billion alcohol toll facing Australia, there is no excuse for not restricting alcohol advertising and mandating health information labels on all alcohol products.

“For the past year Family First has been calling on the Government to address Australia's \$15.3 billion alcohol toll,” Family First leader Steve Fielding said today. “We need to create a responsible drinking culture and a good first step is for the government to back Family First’s *Alcohol Toll Reduction Bill*.”

“The government no longer has any excuse to delay action. As a nation we have tackled our road toll, our drug toll and our tobacco toll with success,” Senator Fielding said. “Now it is time to get tough on booze and tackle our alcohol toll.

“The facts on the alcohol toll are scary and are piling up. These are just a few examples from submissions to the current Senate Inquiry into Family First’s *Alcohol Toll Reduction Bill*:

- Alcohol kills three times more Australians than all illicit drugs combined.
- One million kids live in a home where one adult binge drinks;
- Children under the age of 12 are exposed to 1 in every 3 alcohol ads seen on average by mature adults;
- More than 30,000 kids 15 years or older binge drink every week;
- 20% of teenagers 16 and 17 years old binge drink every week;
- 200,000 Australians have an undiagnosed brain injury from excessive drinking;
- 2 million Australians are at risk of brain damage from excessive alcohol consumption;
- Alcohol is second only to tobacco as a preventable cause of death and hospitalisation in Australia;
- Alcohol causes 4,300 deaths and costs almost 400,000 hospital bed days per year;
- Up to 20 per cent of road deaths have alcohol as a factor;
- Under-age teenagers (13-17 years) are exposed to alcohol advertising levels that are virtually identical to that of young adults (18-24 years);
- Teenagers are in particular danger from binge drinking with over 80% of all alcohol consumed by 14-17 year olds done so at high risk levels that lead to acute harm.”

Family First's *Alcohol Toll Reduction Bill* requires health information labels on all alcohol products. It would ensure all alcohol advertising is pre-approved by a government body, that television alcohol advertising runs after 9pm and ads should not link drinking to personal, business, social, sporting, sexual or other success.

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