



Media Release

Senator Alan Eggleston

Liberal Senator for Western Australia

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Senate sends sobering message – Alcopop tax not the way

WA Liberal Senator Alan Eggleston today said last night's defeat of the Alcopop tax should send a clear message to the Rudd Government that a single tax on premixed drinks is not the solution to Australia's alcohol problems.

"If Kevin Rudd is serious about tackling the issue of binge drinking, he should consider a volumetric tax on all alcohol, not just on premixed drinks" Senator Eggleston said.

Senator Eggleston, who voted against the Bill, said the tax didn't address the real problems associated with binge drinking, and instead served merely as a revenue stream to fill the Government's coffers.

"The issue of binge drinking is not exclusive to premix drinkers, and requires a solution that addresses the problem across every drinking demographic."

"Together with the AMA I have been calling on the Federal Government to tackle this prominent issue head on with a volumetric tax that will help curb excessive alcohol consumption amongst all ages, including teenagers."

"Currently, wine from casks (average 12 per cent alcohol) is taxed at about six cents per standard drink, compared to beer (average three per cent alcohol) which is taxed at about 43 cents."

In 1999, a Curtin University study into cask wine drinking patterns in the Northern Territory found that, with the introduction of a levy, average consumption dropped significantly.

It concluded that taxation was an effective way to reduce excessive alcohol consumption and related harm.

Senator Eggleston said the human cost of alcohol abuse was incalculable, particularly in remote and regional Australia.

"I appreciate that the current Government has raised this serious issue, however the solution needs to reflect the bigger problem at hand, which is a growing culture of alcohol abuse."

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