



Media Release

Senator Alan Eggleston

Liberal Senator for Western Australia

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‘Alcopop’ tax fails to address sobering reality - Eggleston

Western Australian Liberal Senator Alan Eggleston today said the Rudd Government’s decision to put a tax on pre-mixed alcoholic drinks was only a drop in the bucket, and failed to address the real issue of binge drinking.

“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.

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

“I have been calling on the Federal Government for several years 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.”

Ends