

New proposal for alcopops tax applauded

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A coalition of peak health organisations* have welcomed today's proposal by the Federal Government to maintain the alcopops tax.

"This is a great day for the health of all Australians," said Alcohol Policy Coalition member John Rogerson (CEO, Australian Drug Foundation).

"We applaud the Government's proposal announced today to keep the funds collected from the alcopops tax and to maintain the tax rate for the immediate future," he said.

VicHealth Chief Executive Officer Todd Harper welcomed the announcement and said he hoped that the Government would also ensure that some of the alcopops revenue would be directed into programs to prevent alcohol harms in the community.

"It's what the community wants," Mr Harper said.

New research commissioned by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) and the Australian Drug Foundation has found that 89 percent of people believe that some of the alcohol tax revenue collected should be used to fund alcohol prevention and treatment programs.

"The new survey to gauge people's views on alcopops has found that over 85 percent of respondents believe that the sweet taste of some alcohol products increases the risk of underage drinking," said VicHealth Chief Executive Officer, Todd Harper.

"The survey also found that more than two of every three respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the low price of some alcohol products increases the risk of underage drinking.

"There is strong evidence that increasing the cost of alcohol reduces overall consumption," Mr Harper added.

Mr Rogerson said alcopops drinkers are drinking less since the tax increase and will therefore be at reduced risk of actual harm from violence, sexual assault and accidents.

"The alcopops tax offers the opportunity to reduce the attraction of alcohol to children and adolescents and we congratulate the Government for today's renewed proposal.

"This is an important step towards changing the harmful drinking culture amongst young people in particular," Mr Rogerson added.

* The Alcohol Policy Coalition (the Coalition) is comprised of health agencies – Australian Drug Foundation, Cancer Council Victoria, Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre, and VicHealth - who share a concern about the level of alcohol misuse in the community. The Coalition's long-term goal is to reduce the negative health and social consequences of alcohol

Source: <http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/en/Resource-Centre/Media-Centre/Partner-media-releases/New-proposal-for-alcopops-tax-applauded.aspx>