

WOOLWORTHS LIMITED

Woolworths Limited

ABN 88 000 014 675

1 Woolworths Way, Bella Vista
New South Wales 2153 Australia
Telephone +61 2 8885 0000
Facsimile +61 2 8885 0001
woolworthslimited.com.au

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Dr Janet Woollard, MLA
Chairman
Education and Health Standing Committee
Parliament House
Perth, WA, 6000

Dear Dr Woollard,

Re: Inquiry Into the Tobacco Products Control Amendment Bill 2008

Woolworths Limited is pleased to contribute to the discussion on measures proposed in the Tobacco Products Control Amendment Bill to better protect children and adults from the consequences of passive smoking and from tobacco promotion.

Woolworths Limited operates over 200 outlets in Western Australia which retail tobacco products including Woolworths supermarkets, Big W stores, petrol stations and Dan Murphy and BWS liquor stores. As a leading retailer in Australia, we recognise the role we can play in limiting access to and visibility of harmful tobacco products.

We support the introduction of initiatives aimed at reducing the take-up rate of smoking in Australia. Our commitment to communicating the damaging impacts of smoking is reflected in our corporate programs. Woolworths offers a quit smoking program to all business units across the country. These behaviour modification programs include products and an educational component.

We also believe the sale of tobacco products should be strictly regulated across all retail outlets to ensure consumers receive a clear and consistent warning message regardless of where they purchase.

We note that a number of governments across Australia are introducing or have recently introduced legislation to implement display bans on tobacco products at retail outlets. We believe a nationally consistent approach to tobacco regulation will achieve the best outcome for all Australians. It will ensure consumers receive the same tough message across borders while simplifying the implementation and compliance process for national retailers. We would encourage the WA government to initiate discussions with its state and territory counterparts to create a national regulatory framework that applies the same strict standards to all retail outlets.

The current Act requires that the point of sale display must not be greater than one square metre. With the exception of these areas, most Woolworths retail outlets in Western Australia have 'flipper' attachments on our cigarette shelving.

Woolworths is able to extend these 'flippers' to remove the visibility of these products. Due to the number of outlets we have across the state and the cost associated with reconfiguration, we estimate it could take approximately 12 months to roll this out to all stores.

We thank the committee for providing us with the opportunity to respond to the review of the Bill through this inquiry process. Should you have any questions or queries about this matter, please contact me on (02) 8885 3446 or nsamia@woolworths.com.au

Yours sincerely



Nathalie Samia
Group Manager- Government Relations
Woolworths Limited