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Samantha Holmes

Additives

Elizabeth Cain

( CAIN ELIZABETH )

My I just say first off that I hate tobacco additives.

I have just got off the phone from talking to Dr Brian Priestly, Scientific Director of the Chemicals Safety Unit, about tobacco additives. He is opposed to doing anything on additives saying that it would be a waste of resources (time and money). Dr Priestly is of the view that we should stick to the standard Departmental line that additives would not pose any additional risk to the that posed by tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide. Dr Priestly does not think that a commissioned scientific paper on the known carcinogens in tobacco would be appropriate.

Dr Priestly pointed out that all other dangerous, toxic or carcinogenic substances are regulated in such a way that sale is prohibited or severely restricted. Dr Priestly warned that if further research or work is conducted in this area, the Minister may end up being forced to ban cigarettes. He noted that the issue was looked at in the early 1980's when they listed nasal snuff as a Schedule 7 substances and that the Government decided then that they did not want to regulated cigarettes the way they do all other harmful drugs/poisons. He said the Government decided then to educate rather than regulate.

Dr Priestly did seem to appreciate our predicament that the standard line was not being accepted by the Health advocacy groups but offered no alternative solution other than keeping our Minister fully briefed on why it is so very inappropriate to conduct any further work on tobacco additives.

I would appreciate your advice on what to do next. A big minute to the Minister explaining that we are coming under pressure to do something on additives but that it would be inappropriate and a distraction from the real issue? Or go and do some research? Or have the Royal Australian Chemical Institute prepare a paper on how bad the carcinogens etc that are in tobacco are? Or just forget the whole issue?

Sam

Sam - Thanks. I've  
sent the report into  
T.K. for review. Hold  
fire for a day or  
so. Liz