



Media Release

For Immediate Release

ACT POWERLESS TO BAN RECKLESS VODKA PROMOTION

5 November 2014: Experts say a reckless alcohol promotion at a Canberra City supermarket highlights the deficiencies with existing legislation and regulation, with the ACT Government currently powerless to act.

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) says the promotion and sale of cheap vodka in such close proximity to licensed venues encourages pre-loading and the Government must act swiftly ahead of the summer to strengthen its powers to reduce alcohol harms in the Territory.

The prominent signage on the exterior of the supermarket features one bottle (750 ml) of vodka for \$11.99 or two bottles (1500 ml) for \$20.00, being sold in store at well below cost.

The supermarket is located in close proximity to two of Canberra's biggest licenced venues, Mooseheads and King O'Malley's, and is highly visible to children and young people using the nearby City bus interchange.

FARE Chief Executive Michael Thorn says this bottleshop promotion is an appalling case of aggressive, irresponsible and dangerous alcohol promotion.

"This is irresponsible and reckless promotion at its worst. A supermarket promoting and selling vodka so cheaply and so aggressively right next to popular licenced venues and in an area where young people meet is simply unacceptable," Mr Thorn said.

On 1 May 2014, the ACT Government released the final report of the Liquor Act review with a promise from Attorney General Simon Corbell that 'The Government will now focus on options for further reforms in relation to trading hours, outlet density, licence fees and restrictions on alcohol advertising and promotion.'

Mr Thorn says that now armed with the Review findings, the Government must act to ensure such irresponsible promotions are stamped out.

"80 per cent of all alcohol is purchased from off-licence outlets, but at present the Government has no power to act on irresponsible bottleshop promotions. The ACT Government completed the Liquor Act Review six months ago, and to its credit identified a number of weaknesses in the legislation, but as we head into the summer months the Government must take urgent action to prevent these dangerous alcohol promotions," Mr Thorn said.



Michael Thorn (@Michael Thorn) is available for comment.

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The **Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)** is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to stop the harm caused by alcohol. Alcohol harm in Australia is significant. Over 5,500 lives are lost every year and more than 157,000 people are hospitalised making alcohol one of our nation's greatest preventative health challenges.

For over a decade, FARE has been working with communities, governments, health professionals and police across the country to stop alcohol harms by supporting world-leading research, raising public awareness and advocating for changes to alcohol policy. In that time FARE has helped more than 750 communities and organisations, and backed over 1,400 projects around Australia.

For further information visit FARE's website: www.fare.org.au.