

Senator Mathias Cormann
Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Health Administration

Senator Guy Barnett
Coalition Scrutiny of Government Spokesperson

Joint Media Release

GOVERNMENT FAILS ON PREVENTATIVE HEALTH TASKFORCE REPORT

Thursday 20 August, 2009

Health Minister Nicola Roxon has failed to make public the Government's Preventative Health Taskforce report on the effects of obesity, tobacco and excessive consumption of alcohol despite the Senate yesterday ordering for the report to be tabled by midday today.

The Taskforce was set up in April 2008 to assist in developing the National Preventative Health Strategy and delivered a report to Government on 30 June. Yesterday the Senate passed a motion ordering the report to be tabled, *"by the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Ageing, no later than 12 pm on Thursday, 20 August 2009."*

The order initiated by Senator Mathias Cormann with Coalition Scrutiny of Government Spokesperson, Senator Guy Barnett, has been ignored. Minister Roxon has written to the Manager of Government Business in the Senate advising she will comply within 30 days, given that Senate sanctions for 'failure to comply' kick in at that time.

"This is just not good enough," Senator Cormann said today.

"Instead of sitting on the report and leaking it in piecemeal fashion it should be released immediately," he said.

"An Access Economics study released in August last year showed obesity is costing the Australian economy over \$58 billion every year, and the effects of tobacco have been calculated as costing \$32 billion per year," said Senator Barnett.

"This shows just how important it is that we address these issues.

"The Government is all spin and no substance," said Senator Barnett.

"If the Government is serious about preventative health, they must release this report immediately so that these vital health issues can be addressed as soon as possible." Senator Cormann concluded.

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