



18 June 2012

Committee Secretariat
Finance and Expenditure Select Committee
Parliament Buildings
WELLINGTON

Tēnā koe

**Customs and Excise (Tobacco Products – Budget Measures)
Amendment Bill**

The New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Customs and Excise (Tobacco Products – Budget Measures) Amendment Bill 2012. While we advocate strongly to increase excise tax on tobacco, we do not wish to do an oral presentation before the committee.

As a member of the Smokefree Coalition we support the vision for a smoke free Aotearoa New Zealand by 2025. We acknowledge that increasing tobacco tax is the single most effective measure in reducing tobacco consumption. We however do not believe that the proposed increases of four times 10-percent will ensure that we achieve the vision of a Smokefree nation by 2025. We strongly urge the committee to consider the recent research by Doctor Murray Laugesen which indicates to achieve the smoke free vision by 2025 excise tax needs to increase by 40-percent initially, followed by three successive increases of 20-percent between 2014-2016.

Dr Laugesen's projected figures indicate that if the government increased the excise tax to 40-percent it would see 100, 000 smokers successfully quit smoking making for a healthier workforce, and preventing half of those persisting smokers from dying many years early from smokingⁱ.

Recent New Zealand research showed that two-thirds of smokers living in low socio economic areas attempted to quit smoking after the excise increases in 2010 and 2011 (Glover, M & Cowie, N, 2011). However relapses were high amongst this group with 40-percent of smokers who did not quit successfully adapting by reducing their consumption per day with 22-percent adapting by switching to cheaper brandsⁱⁱ.

As health professionals, we urge the committee to ensure that smokers living in low socioeconomic areas have additional support and access to



smoking cessation services when excise rises in order to ensure those who attempt to quit are successful.

NZNO wishes to recommend that you:

- **Agree** to increase excise tax by 40 percent in 2013 followed by three successive 20-percent increases between 2014-2016;
- **Agree** to ensure that smokers living in low socioeconomic areas have additional support and access to smoking cessation services when excise rises in order to ensure those who attempt to quit are successful;
- **Note that** we wish to be involved in any further discussion in achieving a Smokefree Aotearoa New Zealand by 2025.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leanne Manson'.

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NEW ZEALAND NURSES ORGANISATION

The New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) is the leading professional body of nurses and nursing union in Aotearoa New Zealand, representing over 46 000 nurses and health workers. Te Runanga o Aotearoa is the arm through which our Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership is articulated. Our members include nurses, midwives, students, kaimahi hauora, health care workers and allied health professionals.

The NZNO vision is "Freed to care, Proud to nurse". Our members enhance the health and wellbeing of all people of Aotearoa New Zealand and are united in their professional and industrial aspirations.

ⁱ Laugesen, M. 2012. One billion fewer cigarettes, 100,000 fewer smokers. *The New Zealand Medical Journal*. 8 June 2012, Vol 125 No 1356.

ⁱⁱ Glover, M.& Cowie, N. 2011, *Intermittent Smoking Snapshot 2010 – 2012*, University of Auckland - Centre for Tobacco Control Research, report of survey funded by Ministry of Health.