



## ***Report on outdoor advertising tabled today***

“It’s time to reclaim our public space.” That’s the message of the report tabled today by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs, *Reclaiming Public Space: Inquiry into the regulation of billboard and outdoor advertising*.

The Committee found that outdoor advertising, which is both unavoidable and accessible to an entirely unrestricted audience, should be treated as a specific category in the advertising self-regulation system. The Committee recommended that a separate code of practice should be developed to reflect the unique characteristics of outdoor advertising.

“Public spaces are for the use of all members of the community—men, women and children—and the right to enjoy the amenity of a space should not be compromised by an advertiser’s array of inappropriate images,” said Mr Perrett.

The Committee made 19 recommendations for improving and strengthening the self-regulatory system, including regular review of industry self-regulation by the Government and a shift towards partial or complete regulation if the reviews yield unsatisfactory findings.

The Committee Chair Graham Perrett MP said, “We looked at many of the concerns about advertising self-regulation, but ultimately we agreed that there is scope for the system to be tightened up rather than completely replaced. However, we as a Committee feel very strongly that if the industry doesn’t shape up, then government regulation is definitely on the cards.”

The report also makes recommendations for a separate advertising code of practice for outdoor advertising, regular reviews of voluntary advertising codes, more industry research and consultation with the community and relevant experts, provision of copy advice, and changes to the Advertising Standards Bureau’s independent review process.

“The advertising industry knows that outdoor advertising is highly effective, but this method of reaching consumers needs to be balanced with people’s expectations of what is acceptable in our public spaces,” said Mr Perrett. “If some people don’t like an ad they see on TV or in a magazine, they can choose not to look at it. This is not the case with outdoor advertising.”

Electronic copies of the report are available to download from [www.aph.gov.au/spla](http://www.aph.gov.au/spla).

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Graham Perrett MP, on (07) 3344 2622 or 0408 883 312. The following organisations are available for independent media comment:

- Outdoor Media Association
- Collective Shout
- Coalition for Food Advertising to Children

The Secretariat can provide contact details for these organisations’ spokespersons.

For more information about the inquiry, please visit the Committee website at: [www.aph.gov.au/spla](http://www.aph.gov.au/spla) or contact (02) 6277 2358 or [spla.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:spla.reps@aph.gov.au).

**For media comment**, please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Graham Perrett MP, on (07) 3344 2622 or 0408 883 312.

**For all other information**, please contact the **Secretariat of the Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs**:

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**Members of the Committee will address a press conference at 12.15pm on Monday, 4 July 2011 in Committee Room 1R2. Ms Fiona Jolly, CEO of the Advertising Standards Bureau, will also be available to take questions at the press conference. Live audio webcast:**  
<http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>