

It's your
turn to shout

AT THE HEART
OF THE MATTER,
NZ DRUG
FOUNDATION.

Te Tūāpapa Tarukino o Aotearoa

Have your say on Alcohol Pricing



“ One of the consequences of alcohol being promoted and sold at pocket-money prices is that we risk losing sight of its status as a legal drug, capable of causing serious harm to others. ”

SIR GEOFFREY PALMER

HAVE YOUR SAY ON ALCOHOL LAW CHANGES.

SUBMISSIONS CLOSE ON

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[drugfoundation.org.nz/
your-turn-to-shout](http://drugfoundation.org.nz/your-turn-to-shout)

A new alcohol bill is currently before Parliament. The Alcohol Reform Bill is the Government's response to the review of our liquor laws by Law Commission President Sir Geoffrey Palmer. The Law Commission made 153 recommendations but not all have been accepted. There is still time to persuade the Government to strengthen its response.

FACTSHEETS

- 1 Background to Alcohol Reform Bill
- 2 Alcohol Pricing
- 3 Alcohol Marketing
- 4 Alcohol in your Community
- 5 Drink Driving
- 6 Social Supply
- 7 Purchase Age

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KEY FACTS

ALCOHOL HAS BECOME MORE AFFORDABLE RELATIVE TO INCOME.

RAISING THE PRICE OF ALCOHOL IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO REDUCE ALCOHOL-RELATED HARMS.

62¢

A 3L CASK OF WHITE WINE CAN BE BOUGHT FOR AS LITTLE AS \$16.99 (62C PER STANDARD DRINK).

75%

OVER 75% OF SUBMISSIONS TO THE LAW COMMISSION SUPPORTED INCREASES IN PRICE (EITHER VIA EXCISE TAX OR MINIMUM PRICING).



What did the Law Commission recommend?

- Raising the excise tax on alcohol by 50% to achieve a 10% average increase in retail prices. They advised that this would be the most effective pricing policy to reduce harms.
- Government fully investigates a minimum pricing scheme and makes it a legal requirement for retailers and producers to provide sales and price data.
- Excise tax on low-alcohol products (up to 2.5% alcohol by volume) should be reduced to encourage the production and availability of these products.

What was the Government's response?

- **Very weak.** The Government rejected all three of the Law Commission's recommendations on pricing. It has ruled out raising excise tax and stalled for time on the idea of minimum pricing. Instead, it prefers to 'monitor international developments' and 'review the information available on alcohol sales and price after one year'.
- It has rejected the Law Commission's recommendation to make it a legal requirement for retailers to provide price and sales data.
- It has rejected the idea of reducing excise tax on low-alcohol products.

OVERALL GRADE AWARDED

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FAIL, HAS SHOWN NO UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE AND FAILED TO RECOGNISE ANY OF THE REQUIREMENTS. COMPLETE REWRITE NEEDED.

“ One thing there is literally no appetite for is to increase excise taxes. ”

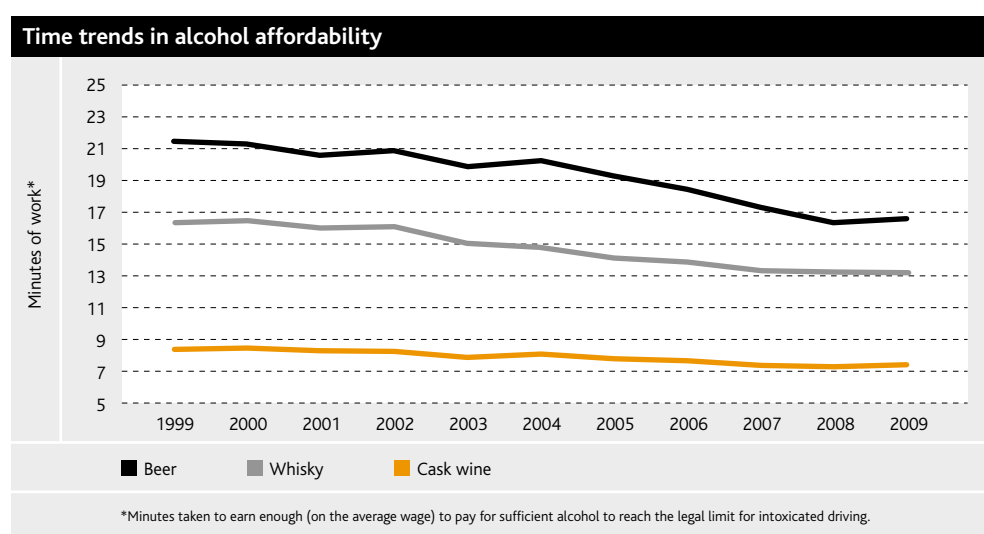
PRIME MINISTER JOHN KEY – WITHIN HOURS OF THE LAW COMMISSION'S REPORT BEING RELEASED

“ A can of beer or an RTD can be bought for one or two dollars in many retail outlets. This is less than we pay for bottled water. ”

SIR GEOFFREY PALMER

Research and experience shows:

- Alcohol has become more affordable over the last decade.



- Cheap products are favoured by heavy, harmful and young drinkers.
- Widespread availability of cheap alcohol products encourages excessive and harmful consumption.
- Raising alcohol prices:
 - is one of the best ways to reduce alcohol-related harms such as motor vehicle accidents, violence, sexually transmitted diseases and cirrhosis
 - reduces consumption in high-risk groups such as heavy drinkers and the young
 - reduces the likelihood of young or moderate drinkers becoming heavy drinkers.
- People who enjoy alcohol in moderation will have only minor cost increases if the Government accepts the Law Commission's proposals. The average price of a 330ml beer would rise by just 17 cents and an \$11 bottle of wine would increase by just 96 cents.
- A rise in excise tax will have net economic benefits via the reduced costs to our Police, health services and prisons – a national saving of \$72 million each year.



What should the Government do?

- The Government should accept the Law Commission's main recommendations on pricing, including:
 - increasing excise tax by 50% to achieve a 10% average increase in retail prices
 - fully investigating minimum pricing schemes and making it a legal requirement for retailers and producers to provide sales and price data
 - reducing excise tax on low-alcohol products.
- All revenue from excise tax on alcohol should be used to pay for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services.
- We believe there is a strong case for minimum pricing in addition to a rise in excise tax.
- The Law Commission's recommendations were designed to be a 'mutually supportive package'. We believe the Government should accept the Law Commission's entire suite of recommendations instead of 'cherry picking' the least politically risky options.

What should you do?

- Have your say in creating better alcohol laws by making a written submission to the Select Committee before Tuesday 1 February 2011. This can be as short or long as you like, and you can use this toolkit to help you.
- Tell the Government that it should accept all 153 of the Law Commission's recommendations.
- If you make a written submission, you should also make an oral presentation. You can be as creative as you like. This is your chance to tell your story about the impact of alcohol on your family and community and to tell our politicians about the changes that you want to see.
- Encourage your friends, family and community to get involved. The more New Zealanders who speak out, the more likely it is that the Government will listen.
- Ask to meet with or write to your local MP and let them know your views on alcohol law change.
- Visit www.drugfoundation.org.nz/your-turn-to-shout for more information and the full toolkit.

ABOUT US



The New Zealand Drug Foundation has long been interested in how laws governing the sale and supply of alcohol could be strengthened to reduce alcohol-related harm and create a healthier drinking culture in New Zealand. We provide leadership and representation for our nationwide membership of organisations and individuals working on alcohol and drug issues. This factsheet is one of a number we have developed as part of a toolkit to support communities to be heard on the Alcohol Reform Bill. **Check out our website for more information and the full toolkit.**

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