

Hon Kris Faafoi

Fakafeiloaki, Tēnā koe Minister,

We were so pleased to read your [comments](#) in Newsroom earlier this month supporting a review of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act.

You will be well aware that our communities continue to experience significant harm from alcohol. As members of community action groups on alcohol, we continue to be the ones holding the line and picking up the pieces in the face of a lack of strong Government action on alcohol. Our groups witness the day-to-day harms from alcohol that cut across so many aspects our lives – our health, jobs, safety, and feelings about where we live. The impact of this damage ripples through the generations from our elders, to our youngest and most vulnerable.

The harms have been ignored for too long. We want, and deserve, our communities to flourish. We are tired of decision-makers thinking that drinking is just a bit of harmless fun and that taking action on alcohol would be unpopular. We feel that our needs have been relegated in favour of the interests of the alcohol industry. Decision makers must prioritise people ahead of profit. Given all of the amazing benefits from taking action on alcohol, one would think our political leaders would be lining up to champion the cause. Who doesn't want to leave a legacy of better mental health, reduced suicide, fewer cancers, improved child wellbeing and safer communities?

In 2010, Sir Geoffrey Palmer came to our Ōtara community in the wake of the Law Commission review that he led. Our community had told the Law Commission that we needed our voices to be heard in decisions about how alcohol was sold, that we wanted to see alcohol advertising, sponsorship and promotion banned, and that we wanted to tackle the availability of alcohol, in particular the proliferation of liquor outlets in our community. We were so pleased when Sir Geoffrey Palmer listened to us and reflected our wishes in the recommendations of the Law Commission report. But unfortunately and yet again, none of this has resulted in meaningful action.

Further delays in taking strong action on alcohol will only hurt us more. We can't afford to keep waiting – our lives and livelihoods are degraded daily. We invite you Minister, to come to Ōtara, to meet our community kanohi ki te kanohi. Bring your plan for reform with you. We have been waiting over 10 years for our leaders to make good on Sir Geoffrey Palmer's recommendations.

We look forward to seeing you in Ōtara.

Fakafetai lahi lele, nāku iti noa, nā

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