

21 July 2025

An Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD

By email: taoiseach@taoiseach.gov.ie

CC Jennifer Carroll MacNeill, TD

Minister for Health

By email: ministersoffice@health.gov.ie

Dear Taoiseach,

We are writing to express our strong support for Ireland's mandatory health warning labels on alcohol products, and urge you to ensure that the labels come into force in May 2026 as planned. Clear, visible warnings that highlight the risks of alcohol during pregnancy and alcohol's links to cancer and liver disease are essential to providing the community with accurate information.

Alcohol Change Australia is an alliance of health and community organisations working together to improve the health and wellbeing of the Australian community. Sadly, like Ireland, alcohol products take a significant toll on Australian communities, fuelling violence, injuries, diseases, and deaths. Urgent action at both a local and international level is needed to address the devastating harms.

Ireland's decision to ban smoking in indoor public places in 2004, under your leadership as Minister for Health, was groundbreaking. This move placed Ireland at the forefront of tobacco control worldwide, and many countries have since followed suit. It is recognised that the indoor smoking ban not only saved lives, but shifted international standards in tobacco control.

We now hope that Ireland's alcohol labelling regulations will follow a similar path, setting a strong example for other countries to adopt, including Australia. We appreciate that there can be significant challenges in putting the community's health before industry profits. Australia's journey to introduce mandatory pregnancy warning labels on alcohol products demonstrates both the importance and the challenges of such reforms. It took more than 20 years of sustained advocacy before requirements for pregnancy warning labels were gazetted in 2020. Throughout that time, the alcohol industry raised objections in an effort to delay or weaken the measure, including voicing concerns around trade. Despite this, Australia succeeded in implementing a mandatory pregnancy warning that now empowers the community by raising awareness of the harm alcohol can cause.

We note with encouragement that several Australian wine products on sale in Ireland already carry the Irish warning labels — well ahead of the May 2026 implementation date. This demonstrates that the global alcohol market can adapt, and that regulatory changes can be adopted with minimal disruption.

We commend your Government's continued commitment to prioritising health over profits, and we stand in strong support of this important initiative. It is our hope that Ireland's action on alcohol labelling will inspire the Australian Government to follow and introduce further health warning labels on all alcohol products.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Erin Lalor AM
Chair, Alcohol Change Australia

Hannah Pierce
Executive Officer, Alcohol Change Australia

Example 1 - Australian wine currently for sale in Ireland



Example 2: Australian wine currently for sale in Ireland

