

July 2017

Dear Councillor,

It has been over 500 days since the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill was first introduced to Seanad Éireann. An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar recently outlined to the Dáil that the completion of the Bill would be a priority for his government, which we welcomed. However, regrettably this legislation has now been further delayed until the autumn.

Sadly, during this largely unnecessary delay, our corrosive relationship with alcohol has continued unabated; our consumption levels have again risen significantly and the harms to families and communities and the strains on our health services have continued.

This burden has also posed enormous economic cost, estimated at €2.35 billion on our country.

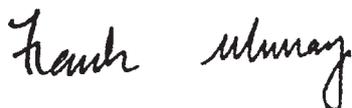
The measures within the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill will protect public health and, in time, will reduce alcohol consumption per capita. This will lead to a reduction in alcohol related harms with a consequential reduction in costs to society. On the reverse, we have quantified the extent of alcohol harm that is pervasive throughout our society, which will continue in the absence of this legislation.

As a local representative, you play a significant role in representing the views of your local community, and know that issues such as the high rate of youth suicide, alcohol-related accidents, violence and incidents are so prevalent. We ask that you add your voice to this debate and encourage your local Oireachtas member to support this vital legislation.

This is the first time that Ireland has ever addressed alcohol misuse as a serious public health issue. This legislation – if enacted in full – will leave a historic legacy, one that will be felt in every local town and community, with less chaotic Emergency Departments, safer streets with less public order disruptions, and better and safer nights out for all.

It is our strong belief that the measures within the Bill, when taken together, will provide a reasonable, pragmatic means to achieving the ambition of this progressive public health initiative – namely to protect children, to ease the pressure on our health services and make for a healthier and more productive society for everyone.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank Murray".

Professor Frank Murray
Chair

ABOUT THE ALCOHOL HEALTH ALLIANCE

The Alcohol Health Alliance is an initiative to support the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill, established by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) and Alcohol Action Ireland. This alliance brings together a wide range of Ireland's leading charities, NGOs, health campaigners and medical professionals, and its mission is to reduce the harm caused by alcohol in our society.

CONTACT: AHAIreland@rcpi.ie TEL: 01 878 0610 <http://alcoholireland.ie/campaigns/aha/>

IT'S NOW OVER
500 DAYS

SINCE THE PUBLIC HEALTH (ALCOHOL) BILL BEGAN ITS LEGISLATIVE PROCESS



Since then ...

Alcohol consumption in Ireland
INCREASED during 2016 to
11.46 litres of pure alcohol
per person aged 15+
in 2016

AN
INCREASE OF
4.8%
FROM 2015



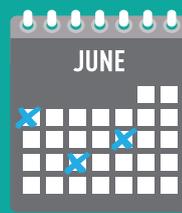
1,614



DEATHS WERE
ALCOHOL RELATED
that is 3 per day

418,410

DAYS OF
ALCOHOL RELATED
ABSENTEEISM



5,497

cases of alcohol
related self-harm
have been treated

807,000

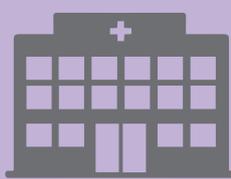
HOSPITAL BEDS
have been lost to
alcohol related illnesses



at a cost of **€656m**

What's possible:

CHANGE THE
CULTURE
OF DRINKING
IN IRELAND



LESS PRESSURE ON OUR
HEALTH
SERVICES



BETTER
FAMILY LIFE
HAPPIER CHILDREN



SAFER STREETS
BETTER NIGHTS OUT

A HEALTHIER
SOCIETY FOR ALL



What's next...

BETTER
LABELLING

SO YOU
KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE
DRINKING



STRONGEST
ALCOHOL IS NOT THE
CHEAPEST
ALCOHOL



ALCOHOL
IS NO LONGER
AN EVERYDAY
GROCERY



CHILDREN ARE
LESS EXPOSED
TO ALCOHOL ADVERTISING



NO SPECIAL OFFERS
FOR EXCESSIVE
DRINKING

NO PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE
since second stage was
completed in Seanad Éireann
OVER 200
DAYS AGO



82% OF IRISH PEOPLE AGREE THAT
"ALCOHOL MARKETING THAT APPEALS TO
YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE PROHIBITED IN IRELAND"
Fine Gael, Fianna Fail and Independent voters' support reflects the national average



NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT!

#phabsaveslives