

June 29, 2017

Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review
c/o Department of Health
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CASUARINA NT 0811
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Dear Review Manager:

Please accept my submission to the Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review.

I am a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania in the United States. I completed a PhD at the Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine at Monash University in 2016, and my primary research focus is the relationship between neighborhood socio-economic conditions, alcohol outlet density, and the incidence of alcohol related harms. My work relates directly to the terms this review.

I attach abstracts for five studies published in peer-reviewed journals in 2015 and 2016 that describe my research findings (Appendix One). All five studies used data from Australia.

1. Morrison C. Exposure to alcohol outlets in rural towns. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*. 2015; 39(1):73-8.
2. Morrison C, Gruenewald PJ, Ponicki WR. Socioeconomic determinants of exposure to alcohol outlets. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*. 2015; 76(3):439-46.
3. Morrison C, Ponicki WR, Smith K. Social disadvantage and exposure to low priced alcohol in off-premise outlets. *Drug and Alcohol Review*. 2015; 34(4):375-8.
4. Morrison C, Smith K, Gruenewald PJ, Ponicki WR, Lee JP, Cameron P. Relating off-premise alcohol outlet density to intentional and unintentional injuries. *Addiction*, 2016; 111(1):56-64.
5. Morrison C, Ponicki WR, Gruenewald PJ, Wiebe DJ, Smith K. Spatial relationships between alcohol-related road crashes and retail alcohol availability. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 2016; 162: 241-244.

Papers 1 and 2 identify that retail market dynamics lead alcohol outlets (grouped into bars, restaurants, and off-premise outlets [e.g. liquor stores]) to concentrate in lower income areas in

in both rural and metropolitan regions. Paper 3 identifies that in addition to having greater concentrations of alcohol outlets in their local areas, lower income populations are also exposed to off-premise outlets that sell cheaper alcohol.

The final two papers demonstrate that geographic areas with greater concentrations of alcohol outlets have greater incidence of traumatic injuries and motor vehicle crashes. Paper 4 identifies that intentional injuries (e.g. assaults) occur more frequently in areas with more bars, licensed restaurants, and off-premise outlets. Unintentional injuries (e.g. falls) occur more frequently in areas with more off-premise outlets. Critically, among all off-premise outlets, chain outlets (representing outlets that are larger and sell cheaper alcohol) contribute most substantially to increased risk for both intentional and unintentional injuries. Paper 5 demonstrates that alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes occur more frequently around areas with more bars.

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) provided funding for field data collection for Papers 3 and 4. I also attach the final report to FARE presenting the findings from these two studies in full (Appendix Two).

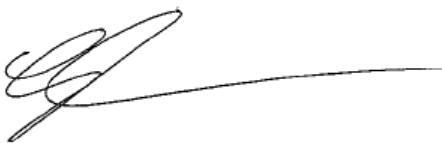
The body of work I present here provides compelling evidence that:

- Alcohol outlets concentrate in lower income areas
- Spatial dynamics common to most physical retail markets produce this distribution
- Not only do lower income populations have more alcohol outlets in their neighborhoods, the liquor stores they have sell cheaper alcohol
- Areas with more alcohol outlets have more traumatic injuries and more motor vehicle crashes
- Areas with more chain outlets, which are larger and sell cheaper alcohol, have more traumatic injuries

As documented in the introduction to Appendix Two, the international peer-reviewed literature identifies similar relationships in other geographic settings, providing strong support for these findings.

Absent regulation, lower income populations will be exposed to more outlets, larger outlets selling cheaper alcohol, and will experience more alcohol-related problems in their local areas. Strong measures, such as exclusion zones for new outlets within distance buffers of existing outlets, and limits on the size of new outlets, are necessary to protect lower income populations and reduce income-related health inequities in the Northern Territory.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Morrison', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Christopher Morrison, PhD