



22 June 2010

## **Scandinavian Governments Reject Retail Display Ban**

Retailers in New Zealand congratulate the Kingdoms of Denmark and Sweden in rejecting proposals to ban displays of tobacco in their countries.

The Association of Community Retailers tobacco spokesperson, Murray Gibson, said today the Scandinavians have provided encouragement and their decisions will be hugely welcomed by small, family-owned retailers who are fighting against similar proposals in New Zealand.

The Danish Government recently rejected proposals to ban displays because of the lack of evidence that it would reduce tobacco consumption; lack of evidence that displays were linked to smoking initiation; unreasonable costs to retailers, and the risk of increasing illicit trade.

Sweden rejected a proposal for a display ban and chose instead to focus on tightening regulations and providing stronger enforcement and supervision around tobacco sales.

Mr Gibson, a Timaru-based tobacconist, welcomed the decision saying the New Zealand Government is seeking domestic and international evidence before making a decision to implement a display ban in New Zealand.

"It is very clear that countries overseas that reject bans on tobacco displays do so because there is no evidence displays are linked to smoking initiation. This is very important because last year, Mr Key's Government said it would be guided by moves overseas before making a decision to ban displays here," Mr Gibson said.

The ACR is calling on the Government to consider more beneficial revision to current tobacco control laws, including improved retailer support and education. The verdict of the Swedish Government to reject display bans and instead focus on ways to strengthen and improve enforcement would be a far more effective way for the New Zealand Government to combat smoking prevalence, Mr Gibson said.

Mr Gibson said there was international research soon to be released in the United Kingdom that would show that a display ban in Canada has had a detrimental effect on the retailing environment but has done nothing for reducing smoking.

ENDS

**Contact: Murray Gibson, Tobacconist, Timaru Ph 03 688 9677 or 03 686 1344**