

To who it may concern,

I would like the TGA keep poppers regulation the way they are i.e. not ban poppers. Poppers do not pose a social and medical problem and have been around for several decades. I do not support the ban on poppers. As a gay man, I use poppers and am affected by this change.

I am a professional PhD candidate and a professional accountant including a member of Company Directors association. I suffer from a disability too.

I am a user of poppers. I have lived a healthy and normal life. I have never had poppers related problems. Poppers have been used by gay men since the 1970s. Poppers doesn't pose a serious societal Or medical problem for the TGA to suddenly consider banning this substance.

As a gay man I have used poppers for sex. It has help me enhance and facilitate pleasure, it has helped during sexual encounters. Socially created stigma often can make gay sex a nervous and tense experience. Using poppers can help with relaxation and facilitating and enhancing sexual experience. Similar to personal lubricants, poppers can help with sex. Banning poppers would seriously limit my sexual life and ability to be intimate with a partner. Given the historical discrimination faced as a gay man in relation to sexual activity; the ban would further eat away at my sexual confidence. Social discrimination, homophobia and attitudes create internal homophobia and anxieties about gay sex. Poppers can help with relaxion and assist in overcoming such anxiety hence facilitating and enhancing sexual experience with a partner. Banning poppers would also reduce my confidence broadly and seriously impact on my individual freedoms. There are thousands of other gay men who would be in similar situation to me. Sexual pleasure and intimacy is a very important part of living life; for me and other gay; a ban of poppers will severely reduce sexual pleasure. This is a huge human cost.

Regulating poppers is like TGA regulating sex. In a free society, regulations should be minimised to ensure individual freedoms. This recent ban from TGA does not consider these factors. It is discriminatory towards homosexuals and people that use them. There have been very few cases of serious harm in the last several decades of its use; TGA should not be interfering with an issue that is not there. TGA is creating a problem out of nothing.

The probability of injury, which is likely to be extremely low given the common use of poppers in the gay community. This is not considered by TGA.

Literature supporting the harm from poppers is very weak.

Regulating poppers is the TGA (a heterosexually dominated organisation) regulating and essentially discriminating against the minority homosexual people.

It seems that TGA is becoming moral police and has a problem with anal intercourse. It is not for TGA to decide/police how and what and how people engage in sexual pleasure. Will TGA also start regulating personal lubricants and others sexual enhancing items?

In the UK, poppers have not been banned and was not consider causing a social problem. Why is this not the case here. Restricting access to poppers will place Australia out of step with other jurisdictions, including the United Kingdom, which have rejected a ban on nitrite inhalants.

Such regulation is unlikely to work or reduce use; hence creating a situation where innocent users are criminalised, and their freedoms taken away.

Placing poppers in the same legal category as crystal methamphetamine and gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) may reduce the barrier to uptake of those substances, which are significantly more strongly-associated with HIV and viral hepatitis acquisition. This would not be ridiculous but would also demonstrate that TGA is out of touch.

Smoking is more harmful than poppers and warning system is used. Using a warning label may be a better way to reduce risk with poppers. The risks associated with isopropyl nitrite could be prevented by scheduling isopropyl nitrite, requiring warnings on poppers products, and through the promotion of harm reduction messages. This would be a more proportionate response to the low risk (probability and severity) of harm, following the risk-based approach the TGA describes on its own website. This would be a more sensible approach to poppers.

It is ironic that given marriage equality has been passed; that discriminatory legislation such as this are being considered by TGA.

In other developed countries (USA) substances are being deregulated such as marijuana. It is a shame that TGA is consider with further regulation and taking individual freedoms away.

Poppers do not need to be regulated as they do not constitute a serious social and medical problem.

Please leave the regulation as they are i.e. do not ban poppers. I do not support the ban on poppers. Other methods such as warning labels would be better suited to minimising risk with poppers.

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Via email 9th October 2018