



PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

TOBACCO PLAIN PACKAGING: TRIED, TESTED AND FAILED

IMPERIAL TOBACCO CANADA DENOUNCES THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO TAKE A NANNY-STATE APPROACH INSTEAD OF PROGRESSIVE POLICY OPTIONS PROVEN TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Montreal, Quebec (April 30, 2019) – Despite evidence from other countries that demonstrates such policies do not work, the federal government has announced that it will publish its final regulations for implementing plain packaging for tobacco products in Canada.

“We remain shocked that despite all of the evidence, the Government of Canada is moving ahead with bad public policy,” said Eric Gagnon, Head of Corporate and Regulatory Affairs at Imperial Tobacco Canada. “The experience of other countries demonstrates that plain packaging does not change consumer behavior and that it’s a proven way to fuel an already booming illegal tobacco market in Canada.”

While the federal government proceeds to impose their plain packaging policy on the legal tobacco industry, over 20% of the market remains controlled by illegal operators and criminal organizations selling products outside of any regulatory framework and untaxed – depriving Canadian governments of over 2 billion dollars in tax revenue every year.

“The illegal tobacco problem in Canada is poised to get much worse now that it will be impossible to differentiate between a legal and illegal product. Not only has the federal government had its head in the sand for long enough when it comes to illegal tobacco, they have facilitated the thriving illegal market by allowing illegal operators unfettered access to the Canadian market. The RCMP have stated that there are 50 illegal factories operating in Canada and 175 criminal gangs involved in the illegal trafficking of tobacco, and the feds have done nothing about it. They now need to step up and address the issue they created themselves,” added Gagnon.

MULTIPLE INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDIES

Five years after Australia became the first country to introduce plain packaging of tobacco products, the Australian Government's own data demonstrated that the policy had no impact on reducing smoking across the country. The Australian government themselves admitted that smoking rates had not declined in the five years since the introduction of plain packaging, the first time the rates had not decreased in more than two decades.

“Despite what some Canadian anti-tobacco lobbyists will claim, plain tobacco packaging has been tried, tested and failed, and it will have the same result in Canada,” stated Gagnon. “The plain packaging experiment in Australia, New Zealand, France and the United Kingdom have yielded the same results: plain tobacco packaging does not work.”

Imperial Tobacco Canada reassures its adult consumers that despite this regulatory change its products will remain available across Canada and there is no need to procure products from illegal sources. It invites adult consumers to learn more about plain packaging at www.plainpack.ca

A HARM REDUCTION APPROACH

Imperial Tobacco Canada is hopeful that the federal and provincial government will now amplify their efforts and continue to take the necessary steps to properly regulate vaping products in a way that restricts youth access while maximizing the potential benefits these products can offer adult smokers.

“In order for these products to achieve their full potential, it will require federal government leadership to ensure regulatory frameworks across Canada allow and support responsible communication to adult smokers, education of retailers on the appropriate methods of sale, and proper enforcement and penalties to ensure youth do not gain access to these products,” concluded Gagnon.

In Canada, the Health Ministry has already recognized the potential of vaping products as a harm reduction tool, and the Health Canada website affirms that “Vaping is less harmful than smoking”. Health Canada it is not alone in its approach to vaping. Multiple studies and academic journals have reaffirmed the less harmful nature of vaping products, while many health groups, including Public Health England (the United Kingdom’s equivalent of Health Canada), have estimated that vaping products are at least 95 percent less harmful than traditional cigarettes. The UK’s approach to vaping has resulted in over 1.7 million smokers quitting.

As part of its [Transforming Tobacco](#) journey, Imperial Tobacco Canada continues to embrace the principles of harm reduction by offering adult smokers a range of products with reduced risk potential, such its portfolio of vaping products, which includes Vype, and glo, its tobacco heated product.

-30-

For more information or interview requests, please contact:

Kat Wnek
Torchia Communications
O: (514) 288-8290 X 234
C: (514)677-9635
kat@torchiacom.com

Paul Vaillancourt III
Torchia Communications
C: 514-996-6224
paulv@torchiacom.com