

Please see below correspondence to Mr Hatfield, Director Adjudication Branch, ACCC jointly from:

- The Hon. Catherine King MP, Shadow Minister for Health
- The Hon. Dr Andrew Leigh MP. Shadow Assistant Treasurer & Shadow Minister for Competition
- Senator Claire Moore, Shadow Minister for Women

Sincerely

Meredith Horne

Adviser to Senator Claire Moore

Shadow Minister for Women

Urgent by Email: adjudication@accc.gov.au

22 April 2016

Dear Mr Hatfield

RE: Proposed re-authorisation of infant formula marketing Agreement

We are writing in relation to the ACCC's proposed draft decision to re-authorise, for 10 years, the *Marketing in Australia of Infant Formula: Manufacturers and Importers Agreement (MAIF Agreement)*. Specifically, we are writing to urge that any such ACCC authorisation limit the term of the determination.

We also write to indicate our interest in this important issue, and communicate ALP support for more effective implementation of the WHO International Code of Marketing on Breast-milk Substitutes and subsequent World Health Assembly resolutions. The ALP has had a longstanding interest and support for protecting the Australian community from inappropriate marketing of breastmilk substitutes, and we note that the MAIF was introduced in 1992 by the ALP Government.

We are deeply concerned that in 2013 the current government abolished the longstanding arrangements for public oversight of the industry's MAIF Agreement, and industry is proposing that the authorisation of its new MAIF Agreement extend for 10 years. We are aware that the World Health Assembly will be considering stronger guidelines regarding marketing of food for infant and young children in late May, and believe the Australian parliament needs to have the opportunity to discuss Australia's response to this new global guidance.

The importance of protecting breastfeeding in Australia and elsewhere for public health is well known and highlighted by recent research in leading medical journals which systematically documents the evidence on links between early use of infant formula and maternal breast cancer and other chronic disease conditions in mother and child. Evidence is also accumulating that infant and young child feeding practices have measurable impacts on child cognitive development.

This important issue needs to be properly addressed by the Australian Government, and our parliamentarians will be acting to ensure that Government is held accountable for abolishing public oversight.

We therefore urge that any authorisation of the MAIF be limited to no more than 2 years.

Yours sincerely

The Hon. CATHERINE KING MP
Shadow Minister for Health

The Hon. Dr ANDREW LEIGH MP
Shadow Assistant Treasurer
Shadow Minister for Competition

SENATOR CLAIRE MOORE
Shadow Minister for Women