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PREVENTATIVE HEALTH TASKFORCE REPORT - A GRAB FOR GOVERNMENT POWER OVER OUR LIVES, SAYS FREE MARKET THINK TANK

The National Preventative Health Taskforce's report released today is a grab for more bureaucratic power, and a grab for more tax by government, said the Institute of Public Affairs, a free market think tank.

"The Taskforce's report advocates widespread government interference and control over individual choices," said Chris Berg, Research Fellow with the IPA.

"New taxes and regulations on cigarettes, alcohol and food will hit Australia's poorest the worst."

The Taskforce's recommendations are a bureaucratic wish list. "The Taskforce recommends 39 accords, scorecards, standards, reviews, action research projects, frameworks, compacts, programs, partnerships, systems, initiatives, criteria, surveys, strategies, agencies, curricula and campaigns for obesity alone."

But Institute of Public Affairs research has found that many of the Taskforce's proposals are unlikely to achieve their goals. "The academic literature shows that advertising bans, tax increases and alcohol regulations do not reduce consumption as easily as the Taskforce believes," Mr Berg said.

"Kevin Rudd and the Coalition should reject the recommendations of the Preventative Health Taskforce."

The Institute of Public Affairs has been researching the relationship between individual choice and regulation for more than 60 years. The results of its research are available at <http://ipa.org.au/sectors/nanny-state/>.

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