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## Law Council Opposes Blanket Ban on Personal Injury Advertising

The Law Council of Australia announced today that it is opposed to any blanket ban on advertising by personal injury lawyers.

As the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General (SCAG) asks the National Legal Profession Reform Taskforce to consider the content and manner of advertising for personal injury legal services, the Law Council says that careful regulation of advertising by lawyers is the most appropriate way to deal with this issue.

Advertising restrictions on personal injury lawyers were imposed in NSW and Queensland to reduce personal injury claims following the so-called insurance crisis in 2002.

Law Council President John Corcoran said, "Bans on legitimate advertising by legal professionals are unnecessary and amount to little more than an attack on a victim's right to information."

"Personal injury lawyers provide a vital service to vulnerable people. Legal aid rarely extends to civil claims and injured people often rely on lawyers to act on a conditional fee basis to gain any compensation. Banning advertising in these areas makes it more difficult for injured people to find a lawyer willing to assist them," he said.

Currently, in all jurisdictions, there are appropriate restrictions on advertising under legal professional codes of conduct, prohibiting false or misleading advertising and other forms of unprofessional conduct.

"It is appropriate to regulate advertising to ensure it meets high professional standards in the legal sector. However, wholesale bans on advertising by lawyers is an over-reaction and should not occur," Mr Corcoran said.

"It is in the best interests of the public that personal injury advertising is carefully regulated rather than banned, and the Law Council will be making a strong and detailed submission to the taskforce which will set out clear reasons why this should be the case," Mr Corcoran concluded.

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*The Law Council of Australia exists to represent the legal profession at the national level, to speak on behalf of its constituent bodies on national issues, and to promote the administration of justice, access to justice and general improvement of the law.*