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Sent: Monday, 19 June 2017 7:47 PM
To: Committees; [REDACTED]
Subject: Submission to inquiry into billboards

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Good evening

Please note the following views in relation to your inquiry into billboards in the ACT.

The ACT community benefits from many advantages over comparably sized urban areas in Australia. One of the most pleasant aspects of living in the bush capital is the abundance of nature and how urban architecture seems to fit seamlessly into the surrounding natural areas. The ACT government is to be congratulated for its work to date on preventing outdoor advertising from intruding into Canberra's public space. The current billboard policy has resulted in, compared to other metro areas in Australia, the absence of garish, distracting, visually polluting advertisements.

Large, garish outdoor advertising like billboards holds no potential to 'enliven urban areas'. This is a deceptive phrase which only serves to mask the ACT government's own financial interest in allowing greater outdoor advertising. If this is what you are seeking, then focus on projects that bring together groups of people such as markets, festivals and useable parks and recreational areas.

Billboards represent an unwelcome intrusion into the visual landscape. This quote sums it up: "You thought this was public space, but we're taking it over. You come to this street, park or mall not as a citizen enjoying what you own collectively -- your public space -- but as a customer, a potential source of profit. We're taking over this space."

I see no benefits in changing the ACT government's policy, unless it is to restrict the use of billboards even further to prevent such intrusive advertising such as displayed in these photos:
<http://www.ianmcauley.com/cras/cras.html> Wrap advertising on buses is just as offensive and unnecessary as outdoor billboards, and should be reconsidered as well.

It is an unfortunate reality that this inquiry may receive fewer submissions from ordinary community members than the small, vocal minority with a financial interest in reducing billboard regulation. I am deeply interested in this type of issue, yet only learned about this inquiry today and I sit here writing this submission in my own limited free time. There are countless others in my position who you will not hear from; instead, you will hear from business employees and owners who can afford to write detailed submissions during their workday.

I urge the ACT government to maintain tight regulatory regimes befitting to a city that claims to be the bush capital. Maintain the tight regulatory regimes for your community, which cannot be as outspoken about the issue but which collectively receives a greater benefit from an unpolluted landscape than the vocal minority with a financial stake.

Regards
Eliza M. Medina

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