

**From:** Siobhán Leslie [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 20 June 2017 7:07 PM  
**To:** Committees  
**Subject:** Submission to inquiry into Billboards



To whom it may concern,

I wish to make a submission into your current inquiry into billboards in the ACT.

I wish to express my disagreement with any relaxing of our current rules and practices, or any changes that increase the quantity of billboards or advertising in the ACT. This is something I feel very strongly about. I already feel that our regulations are being whittled away to our detriment (for example allowing Ainslie FC to have billboards on their private land, and the Convention Centre having a digital billboard).

Visual pollution is a modern-day burden that thankfully Canberra has mostly avoided - due to the great policies that we have and are able to enact. Billboards, by their very nature, are unmissable. The encroaching commercialisation of public space is an issue that we cannot ignore. Visual pollution is real, and advertising has been shown to have negative impacts on people's lives - creating excess spending, bringing down people's self-esteem, it creates inequality, distractions for drivers,

Public opinion globally is shifting. We should not be considering increasing outdoor signage when cities like Sydney, Sao Paulo, Vancouver, Buenos Aires, and Barcelona are now all pending taxpayers money trying to clampdown on existing billboards to improve the look of their cities. We Canberrans have already (yet again) what many are envious of! Let's keep it that way.

This is Canberra - we need to think big and bold, and 'blue sky'. We need to problem-solve the issue facing our country! We can't do this if we are forever bombarded with logos and messaging. The location of Canberra was chosen specifically due to its "picturesque location". Further billboards and advertising will clutter our city by taking away from the true beauty of what we have here.

Canberra is just on the cusp of breaking into itself - over the past 5 years we have hit puberty. We are finding our cool and our identity. We are developing our sub-cultures. Having no billboards is such a part of this. It is one more thing that makes me proud to be Canberran. It gives me bragging rights when I have interstate visitors.

I apologise that this is not a very long or concise submission - I only just found out about the inquiry, and am totally flat out - but as this is so important to me, I had to respond.

As the saying goes "you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone". Let's please not make this mistake with our beautiful city.

I am more than happy to be involved in this consultation process further.

yours faithfully  
Siobhan Leslie



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