



MEDIA RELEASE

DR CRAIG EMERSON

Minister for Small Business, Independent Contractors and the Service Economy
Minister for Competition Policy and Consumer Affairs
Minister Assisting the Finance Minister on Deregulation

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COAG moves on competition barriers

The Federal Government has moved with the states and territories through COAG to ensure planning laws do not unjustifiably restrict competition in grocery retailing.

Minister for Competition Policy and Consumer Affairs, Dr Craig Emerson, said COAG yesterday recognised that competitive benefits can be secured through sensible planning and zoning systems.

“Anti-competitive planning and zoning laws are at their worst when they allow incumbent businesses to object to applications so as to prevent or delay entry by rivals to protect commercial interests,” Dr Emerson said.

“Yesterday COAG gave a commitment to ensure that any unjustifiable protections for existing businesses from new and innovative competitors are eliminated.

“COAG also agreed to crack down on anti-competitive attempts to abuse the planning system by blocking and delaying tactics to keep rivals out”.

Further, COAG has agreed that next year the Productivity Commission will report on the states’ and territories’ planning and zoning systems to identify practices that support or unjustifiably restrict competition.

In its grocery inquiry report, the ACCC found that planning and zoning legislation restricts competition in the supply and use of retail space.

This finding was backed up by the Productivity Commission in its report on *The Market for Retail Tenancy Leases in Australia*.

Ensuring that planning laws do not unjustifiably restrict competition will open up land for competitive rivals, to the ultimate benefit of consumers.

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