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Monday, 4th March 2013

GOVERNMENT WILL SPEND NEARLY \$60 MILLION THIS YEAR LOBBYING ITSELF FOR NANNY STATE POLICIES

The Commonwealth government will this year give \$57.7 million of taxpayers' money to the Australian National Preventive Health Agency to lobby the government for Nanny State policies, according to a new paper by the free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs.

The paper, *The Biggest Vested Interest of All: How Government Lobbies to Restrict Individual Rights and Freedom*, was written by Chris Berg, a Research Fellow at the IPA.

"The Australian National Preventive Health Agency is a taxpayer-funded lobbyist calling for higher regulations and more taxes on what we eat and drink," said Mr Berg.

The Agency has been lobbying for:

- More regulations on food and beverage marketing to children
- Increased taxes on wine
- Increased regulation on alcohol consumption and availability

In 2011-12, the Agency had 110 "consultations" with government officials to push this Nanny State agenda.

"The Agency is itself a creation of taxpayer-funded lobbying. IPA research has demonstrated that more than one-third of the submissions to the Preventative Health Taskforce – which recommended the creation of the Agency – came from taxpayer funded organisations.

"Treasurer Wayne Swan wrote in the *Monthly* that 'the rising power of vested interests is undermining our equality and threatening our democracy'. But surely he would agree there's no greater vested interest than a highly funded government agency lobbying for new laws and regulations.

"As the Treasurer looks for savings to fund his government's lavish new spending programs, the Australian National Preventive Health Agency would be a great place to start," said Mr Berg.

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