

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

17 May 2019 23:02
Finance Foodsuppl
Proposed VAT on Food Supplements.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the stay of execution you put on the Healthstores of Ireland by giving us a short reprieve until this coming October/November when you plan to revisit your ill-founded proposal to place a 23% hike on all food supplements.

I have spent much of my working life employed in Healthstores - it's what I know - it's what I love.

When I think of my work I automatically think of our clientele - I think of the elderly lady who squirrels away a few euros from her weekly pension to afford her fish oils and her B vitamins to ward off Alzheimer's in her final days and thereby avoid being a burden on the state or on others; I think of the young mother who has two children with special needs and is run ragged in her constant pursuit of services for their benefit - she forfeits a visit to the hairdresser every so often just to afford her multivitamins to keep the show on the road; I think of the conscientious young couple who believe in supplementing the family diet with probiotics and multivitamins to avoid the scourge of winter viruses and tummy bugs; I think of the lovely lady I served today who has arthritic fingers and all she wants to do is play the ukulele.....these are good people, these are people willing to go the extra mile in matters of physical and mental health while aiming for optimum health and well-being for themselves and their loved ones.

I put it to you, good health is a birthright and if you go ahead with your proposal you are in effect robbing these very people of their right to pursue good health and quality of life for themselves and their families. They cannot extend their already tight budgets by an extra 23% and so, with a stroke of the pen you are playing your part in plunging them, and thousands like them, into an uncertain future of possible health complications and a poorer quality of life. Yes, initially you will undoubtedly enhance the coffers with your VAT takings from this sector but in doing so you will do untold damage to this benign industry. People like the aforementioned need to be encouraged, supported and congratulated for the personal input they invest in matters of health and well-being, not penalized by what will be an extortionate addition onto their weekly shopping bill.

As a sector, we are presently having to cope with the looming effects of Brexit and the impact that will have on us, with increasing commercial rates, insurance and overheads - your proposal only compounds all of the above and adds a huge burden of stress to us all as we face into uncertain times and uncharted waters.

Finally, on a more selfish note, if your policy goes ahead, it will most definitely see the demise of several Healthstores countywide, perhaps our own. You will end what was a long and most rewarding love affair between myself and my chosen source of employment thus leaving me unemployed and at my age, unemployable. I therefore urge you, to make your own legacy worthwhile and leave the Irish Healthstore industry to do what they do best - to serve, advise and enlighten all who come through our doors six days a week and leave the better for their encounter.