

US-Australia FTA, PBS and cost of drugs

Media Coverage Summary

(as at 8 August 2004)

ABC NATIONAL TELEVISION Four Corners

8:51PM AEST Monday, 2 August 2004

Producer: Ms Bronwen Reid 02 9950 3000

When US Senator John Kyl came to Australia, the Australian Embassy sent a briefing to Federal Health Minister Tony Abbott's office, which highlights Kyl's commitment to the US pharmaceutical industry.

Grab(s) of: Federal Health Minister Tony Abbott, who says nothing about the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme will change;

US Senator John Kyl;

Federal Trade Minister Mark Vaile, who says they had to convince that Australian taxpayers actually inject millions of tax dollars into medical research;

Professor Peter Drahos, Australian National University, who if the Australian Government resisted there would be the threat of litigation and possible further action;

Nurse Debbie Hopkins, Madison Medical Centre, it is so hard for the poor people of the US to get healthcare and drugs;

Professor Kevin Outtersen, University of Virginia, who says many groups trying to organise a better health system are very interested in the Australian Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme;

Prime Minister John Howard, who says he cannot understand how any party leader could not support the free trade agreement;

Federal Opposition Leader Mark Latham, who says they will take the time to make it right.

Refers to: Medicines Australia; Zoloft
(S33859864)

RADIO NATIONAL PM

5:20PM AEST Tuesday, 3 August 2004

Producer: Mr Michael Carey 02 9333 1500

An interview with Professor Peter Drahos, Australian National University, about the free trade agreement. Drahos says when signing the text of a FTA it is the language in the text that is binding which is not in the hands of the courts, the parliaments or the country.

Drahos says any dispute will be resolved by a trade dispute panel. Drahos says Labor modifying some of the bad effects of the agreement will not work as if US drug companies (for example) are annoyed they will bring it to the attention of the US Trade Minister and say that Australia is reneging on the deal. A joint committee will then investigate the matter, then a trade action may be sought. Drahos says it will be a constant review of what we do in this country regarding health and quarantine.

(S33870591)

ABC NATIONAL TELEVISION Midday News and Business

12:06PM AEST Wednesday, 4 August 2004

News Director: Mr Neil Ross 02 9950 4781

Interview with Peter Drahos, Australian National University, about Free Trade Agreement. Drahos says the Federal Opposition has done little research into the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. Drahos comments the Federal Government cares little about the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. Drahos says the Free Trade Agreement makes it difficult for generic companies to enter the pharmaceutical market and therefore prices may rise. Drahos states he is worried that the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme has become a political issue without substance.

Refers to: Federal Opposition Leader Mark Latham.
(S33881381)

RADIO NATIONAL PM

5:17PM AEST Wednesday, 4 August 2004

Producer: Mr Michael Carey 02 9333 1500

An interview with professor Peter Drahos, Australian National university about the free trade agreement and the issue of evergreening of patents. Drahos says Prime Minister John Howard is wrong because evergreening has been an issue in Australia for decades and the Liberal Party has opened the way for an intensification of the problem. Drahos says the free trade agreement provides an incentive to register more patents and explains that in the future a generic company will need to get a certificate from a patent company who may be loath to grant it because the deterrent value will be greater. Drahos says the Labor party's amendment seems to be policy on the run and asks who will police possible evergreening and what the fines might be. Drahos says Democrat's Lyn Allison is right on this issue. Drahos says the free trade agreement is a contract similar to one with a bank. Drahos says it is a disaster to access to medications for people in South-East Asia and this will send a very depressing message to our regional neighbours.

(S33884417)

ABC NATIONAL TELEVISION The 7.30 Report

7:37PM AEST Wednesday, 4 August 2004

Producer: Ms Marie Mohr 02 9950 3000

A report on the practice of evergreening.

Grab(s) of Federal Opposition Leader Mark Latham, who asks if the Government will accept their amendment;

Prime Minister John Howard, who says the amendment is based of an incorrect perception of patent law;

Professor Peter Drahos, Australian National University, who says Labor hasn't done their homework and the Federal Government doesn't care about the PBS;

Dr Tom Faunce, Australian National University, who says it behoves the Government to make measures to protect the future of the PBS;

David Preswick, pharmacists, who says it will cost those with chronic conditions like diabetes and asthma;

Alan Oxley, former Federal Health Minister Tony Abbott Trade Ambassador, who says Labor should take some credit but the agreement includes certain requirements of notification.

Refers to: GlaxoSmithKline; Pfizer; Roche; Professor Andrew Christie (S33886946)

SBS Television World News Tonight

9:48PM AEST Wednesday, 4 August 2004

News Director: Mr Phillip Martin 02 9430 3040

Some analysts believe the cost of medicines will rise with the free trade agreement, regardless of what Labor tries to do.

Grab(s) of Dr Peter Drahos, Australian National University, who says no country has ever been able to deal with the problem of evergreening.

(S33887601)

ABC Radio West Australia Statewide Liam Bartlett

9:05AM AWST Thursday, 5 August 2004

Producer: Mr Simon Beaumont 08 9220 2729

Bartlett interviews Peter Drahos, Australian National University about how the Federal Opposition wants to make an amendment to pharmaceutical benefits scheme in the Free Trade Agreement between Australia and the USA. Drahos says the Federal Opposition has identified a problem with the FTA in relation of using patterns to create a smoke screen and make it harder for generic companies to make cheaper medical products. He says the Federal Government should have never have agreed to the USA standards of intellectual property in the agreement.

Refers To: The Australian; Generic Medicine Industry Association; Australian Medical Association; Prime Minister John Howard; Federal Opposition Leader Mark Latham; Business Council of Australia.

(M33894496)

The World Today

12.14 PM AWST Thursday 4 August 2004

Complete transcript available at

<http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2004/s1058783.htm>

TRIPLE J ABC Radio

5:38PM AEST Thursday, 5 August 2004

Producer: n/a

Cannane interviews Professor Peter Drahos, ANU, about whether the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme can be protected from the Free Trade Agreement by an amendment to legislation.

Drahos says that Federal Opposition Leader Mark Latham's amendment is aimed at tackling the issue of the "evergreening" of patents for pharmaceuticals. Drahos believes that if the Federal Opposition cannot protect the generic pharmaceutical industry in Australia "we should just be asking ourselves, how much will drugs go up by". Drahos says that Edmund Pratt, Pfizer, got intellectual property rights to GATT and WTO treaties in order to protect his company from competition. Refers To: Prime Minister John Howard; World Health Organisation. (S33899243)

Newspaper articles (these will only be available until 5 September 2004; after this date please contact cecily.stewart@anu.edu.au)

<http://www.rehame.com/printclips/2004-08-05/NATAUSFIN/P3321455.pdf>
<http://www.rehame.com/printclips/2004-08-05/WAWESAUS/P3321708.pdf>
<http://www.rehame.com/printclips/2004-08-05/VICTHEAGE/P3322125.pdf>
<http://www.rehame.com/printclips/2004-08-05/ACTCANTIM/P3322660.pdf>
<http://www.rehame.com/printclips/2004-08-05/NSWSYDMOR/P3323016.pdf>
<http://www.rehame.com/printclips/2004-08-05/NSWBARDAI/P3324944.pdf>
<http://www.rehame.com/printclips/2004-08-05/TASADVOCA/P3323807.pdf>

The Age

20 May 2004

<http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2004/05/20/1085028463939.html>

The Canberra Times www.canberratimes.com.au

9:05AM AEST Wednesday, 2 June 2004

Written By Steve Haynes.

In the discussion over the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, it is disappointing to see academic scaremongering occurring.

Refers to: Professor Peter Drahos, Australian National University; DFAT.

(M33217495)

The Canberra Times

Drug patent regime is unaffected by FTA

READ PROFESSOR Peter Drahos's accusations of inaccuracies (CT Letters, May 31) by Medicines Australia in relation to the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and you would be forgiven for thinking the Professor's academic expertise at Australian National University is fiction writing.

The Canberra Times Letters to the Editor, page 16

Wednesday, 2 June 2004

Edition: First

Article size: 124.63 sq. cm.

Photo: No

Market: ACT

P2841524

The Australian www.theaustralian.com.au

4:05AM AEST Thursday, 20 May 2004

State and territory ministers have condemned Federal Health Minister Tony Abbott's revived talks of a federal takeover of public hospitals. Refers to: Royal Flying Doctor Service; Federal Government; NSW Health Minister Morris Iemma; Prime Minister John Howard; Victorian Health Minister Bronwyn Pike; Queensland Health Minister Gordon Nuttall; South Australian Health Minister Lea Stevens; ACT Health Minister Simon Corbell; Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme; United States/Australia free trade agreement; Peter Drahos, Australian National University; Thomas Faunce, Australian National University; David Henry and Martyn Goddard, former Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee members; Senate inquiry. (M33070065)

774 ABC MELBOURNE Radio News

7:00PM AEST Wednesday, 19 May 2004

News Director: Mr Seamus Haugh 03 9626 1500 An academic think tank has warned that a free trade agreement with the USA will push up the price on prescription drugs by at least 30 percent. Grab(s) of Professor Peter Drahos(ph.sp.), Australian National University. Refers To: Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (M33062875)

SYDNEY 2SER The Wire

6:12PM AEST Monday, 24 May 2004

Producer: Ms Cinnamon Nippard 9514 9514

A report on the US Free Trade Agreement and its effects on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. Grab(s) of Peter Drahos (ph.sp.) from the Australian National University, who says the subsidy will be threatened by the stronger intellectual property laws in the FTA; Steve Haines, Director of Medicines Australia, who says there is nothing in the FTA that will affect the price of medications for consumers; Patricia Arnald, Public Advocacy Director, who discusses media. Refers To: Federal Government; Federal Health Minister Tony Abbott (S33112721)

Matt Rimmer

<http://www.rehame.com/printclips/2004-08-05/NSWSYDMOR/P3324106.pdf>

<http://www.rehame.com/printclips/2004-08-05/TASEXAMIN/P3324044.pdf>

SYDNEY 2SM Grant Goldman

5:22AM AEST Thursday, 5 August 2004

Producer: Mr Justin Ross 02 9922 1269

Goldman says that evergreening is already a problem in Australia, with an academic saying that pharmaceutical companies are already trying to stop cheaper generic drugs making it on the Australian market. He says the Federal Opposition has announced that it

won't support the US free trade agreement unless there are changes to patent laws to protect the PBS.

FREE TRADE. Male talkback caller Steve says that he remains fearful of the effects on the PBS under the US free trade agreement. He says that many Vietnam veterans are still suffering from the side effects of chemicals such as Agent Orange, and thinks that drug companies cannot be trusted to make right ethical decisions on people's health. Steve says that he agrees with suggestions that patent laws be tightened if necessary. Goldman agrees, saying that Matthew Rimmer from the ANU has issued a warning about the PBS under the US free trade agreement. Steve says he is glad that Federal Opposition Leader Mark Latham is taking action against elements of the US free trade agreement.

BRISBANE B105 Radio News

6:00AM AEST Thursday, 5 August 2004

News Director: Ms Loretta Ryan 07 3257 1053

The Federal Opposition has declared it will not support the US free trade agreement without changes regarding local content rules and prescription medicines.

Refers To: Matthew Rimmer (ph.sp.), Australian National University.

SYDNEY 2SM Grant Goldman

7:06AM AEST Thursday, 5 August 2004

Producer: Mr Justin Ross 02 9922 1269

Goldman says that in relation to the US free trade agreement, an academic says that pharmaceutical companies are already trying to stop cheaper generic drugs making it onto the Australian market. He says that the Federal ALP won't support the agreement unless there are changes to patent laws to protect the PBS.

Refers To: evergreening; Prime Minister John Howard; Matthew Rimmer, ANU.

(S33890022)

SYDNEY 2SM Grant Goldman

8:07AM AEST Thursday, 5 August 2004

Producer: Mr Justin Ross 02 9922 1269

Goldman says that evergreening is already taking place in Australia with a prominent academic alleging that pharmaceutical companies are trying to stop cheaper generic drugs making it onto the Australian market. He says that "Maybe Prime Minister John Howard has got it wrong".

Goldman says that the passing of the US free trade agreement has an October deadline, but this still gives the Federal ALP time to decide what form proposed free trade agreement amendments will take.

Refers To: Matthew Rimmer, ANU; Federal Opposition Leader Mark Latham; PBS; Federal ALP; Federal Election.

(S33891486)

HOBART SEA FM Radio News

8:00AM AEST Thursday, 5 August 2004

News Director: Ms Naomi Buchanan 03 6224 1009

The Federal Opposition's proposed amendments to the free trade agreement has been criticised by health experts for the problems it will create.

Refers To: ANU

(M33891541)

2,600

6,000

HOBART MAGIC 107 Radio News

8:00AM AEST Thursday, 5 August 2004

News Director: Ms Naomi Buchanan 03 6231 1073

The Federal Opposition's proposed amendments to the free trade agreement has been criticised by health experts for the problems it will create.

Refers To: ANU

(M33891540)