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Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to support Proposal P1018, which is to remove a restriction on the presence of companion dogs in outdoor dining areas operated by food businesses, while allowing individual food businesses to make their own decisions; and also to commend to you the detailed comment made by Mr Michael Linke, whose letter to you also supported the Proposal.

I am a dog owner and I regularly take my dog to a cafe in the ACT that allows dogs in outdoor areas. That they do this brings them a lot of business from grateful dog owners who want to sit and enjoy a coffee or a meal, alongside their pets, as well to be able to meet up with other dog-owning friends.

Allowing dogs in outdoor areas encourages dog owners to enjoy Australia's "great outdoors" alongside their companion animals. It is good for café businesses, good for dog owners, and good for dogs especially where these dogs might be otherwise cooped up in apartments in densely populated residential areas.

As for the disease risk, there is a far greater risk of people getting diseases from staff with dirty hands or people with colds coughing and sneezing over other patrons, than a dog sitting on a pavement with responsible pet owner.

Indeed it is quite extraordinary that we are still having this discussion. The British allow dogs in pubs; the French in restaurants. There is no sign there has been an outbreak of disease in Europe to bring such practices to an end.

I strongly support this change. I expect that like me, large numbers of other dog owners around Australia, and many café businesses, will be very grateful if it is approved.

Yours sincerely

Di Johnstone

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