

# Hon Casey Costello

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Minister of Customs  
Minister for Seniors  
Associate Minister of Health  
Associate Minister of Immigration  
Associate Minister of Police



26 March 2024

Gus M  
fyi-request-25905-2290c36e@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: OIA-042

Dear Gus

## Response to your request for official information

I acknowledge your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 27 February 2024 for:

*"1. All correspondence and documents received by yourself and your office since 27 November 2023 that mentions the year 2061.*

*2. Per your words during Question Time on 27 February 2024, please provide your definition of "woke virtue signaling."*

*3. All correspondence and documents received by yourself and your office since 27 November 2023 that mentions the word "woke" and/or the words "virtue signaling."*

*4. All correspondence and documents you and your office have provided to your officials, including your political advisors and associated Ministry/Department staff, since 27 November 2023 that mentions the word "woke" and/or the words "virtue signaling."*

The information that you have requested in the first part of your request is refused under section 18 of the Act, as this information will soon be made publicly available on the Ministry of Health website: <https://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/release-ministerial-decision-making-documents>.

The third and fourth parts of your request are refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist.

Regarding the second part of your request, my full quote from the House on 27 February 2024 was: *"There has already been a substantial black market for cigarettes and crime attached to tobacco retailing, and Customs are seeing a high volume of seizures of tobacco, both large and small, and through multiple channels, and an increase in large seizures. It is noted that the previous Government invested \$10 million in the 2022 Budget for a dedicated tobacco enforcement team in Customs, and we will [not] continue with Labour's unworkable, woke, virtue-signalling plans. This experimental prohibition regime will make this problem even worse."* In this context, my definition of "woke virtue signaling" is a disingenuous attempt to show other people that you are looking out for their best interests.

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by calling 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Casey Costello', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Hon Casey Costello  
**Associate Minister of Health**