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**An Bille um Sheirbhís Chúirteanna (Leasú), 2017**  
**Courts Service (Amendment) Bill 2017**

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*Meabhrán Mínitheach*  
*Explanatory Memorandum*

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**AN BILLE UM SHEIRBHÍS CHÚIRTEANNA (LEASÚ), 2017**  
**COURTS SERVICE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2017**

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**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

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**Purpose of the Bill**

This Bill is an amendment to the Courts Service Act, 1998 and introduces a prohibition on investment by the Courts Service in tobacco companies. The Courts Service invests huge sums of money, approximately €1.675 billion on behalf of wards of court and of children under 18 who have received significant court awards.

Currently the Courts Service holds part of this money in investments in the tobacco industry, despite repeated calls for this to stop, the Courts Service have refused to act, citing the fact that is legal for them to have these investments.

This Bill will make these investments in the tobacco industry illegal.

Tobacco illness is the leading cause of preventable death in Ireland and this Bill seeks to remove investments by the Courts Service from an industry that contributes to 6,000 deaths per year in Ireland, as well as millions of deaths worldwide.

Nationally the Bill seeks to compliment the stated objectives of a tobacco free Ireland by 2025, the cornerstone of *Tobacco Free Ireland*.

Internationally the Bill underpins the commitment from Ireland as part of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

**Section 1 - Interpretation**

This section gives the definitions of the terms used in the Bill.

**Section 2 - Prohibition of investment in a tobacco company by the Courts Service**

- (1) This is a straight forward provision to make investments by the Courts Service in the tobacco industry illegal.
- (2) At present families are unaware that some of their money is and was invested in the tobacco industry by the Courts Service. Upon the passing of this Bill, the Courts Service shall formally notify, in writing, the representatives of all wards of courts, and parents or guardians of children under 18, to confirm that their money is no longer invested in the tobacco industry.

**Section 3 - Short title and commencement**

This is a standard section providing the short title and commencement provisions for the Bill.

*Senator Keith Swanick,  
2 Nollaig, 2017.*