

Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Vaping) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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Every Queensland
community deserves
to be a liveable one

28 June 2024

Mr Aaron Harper MP
Chair
Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee
Member for Thuringowa

Email: hec@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Harper MP,

RE: Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Vaping) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Vaping) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, introduced on 12 June 2024 by the Hon. Shannon Fentiman MP, Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women.

The LGAQ understands the purpose of the Bill is to:

- ensure Queensland can appropriately enforce the Therapeutic Goods and Other Legislation Amendment (Vaping Reforms) Bill 2024 (Commonwealth Bill) to ban the importation, manufacture, supply, and commercial possession of all disposable single use and recreational vapes by amending the *Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998* (TOSPA); and
- address the issue of vape littering, by amending the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011* to create a specific dangerous littering offence for depositing a vaping device or vaping accessory (as defined under TOSPA).

Overall, the LGAQ supports these objective as they aim to decrease the incidence of smoking and the use of illicit tobacco products through the appropriate management of smoking devices such as vapes.

It is acknowledged that the proposed legislative amendments do not introduce any additional compliance responsibilities for councils, and this is strongly supported.

Compliance and enforcement activities that involve potentially organised crime structures, such as is observed in the sale and promotion of especially single-use vaping devices, should remain firmly in the hands of the State Government.

Furthermore, the proposed changes to the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011* to introduce the littering of vaping devices as a 'dangerous littering' offence, are supported.

Local governments across Queensland, in line with our partners in the resource recovery industry, are dealing with the impacts of the improper disposal of vapes daily.

As single-use vapes contain batteries, they are a potentially dangerous source of pollution. They also have the potential to ignite fires in collection vehicles and waste sorting stations.

It is therefore critical that State and Federal governments continue to support further improvements to the way batteries, including those contained in single-use vapes, are collected and treated.

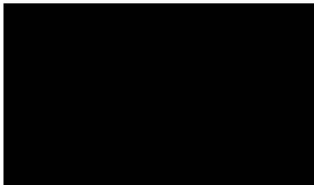


This Bill provides important steps in the right direction, however the LGAQ also seeks the support of the State Government to advocate for the further expansion of the National Return and Disposal of Unwanted Medicines Program (NatRUM), to include vaping devices, both legal and illicit, and provide a safe collection and disposal environment for these products.

In conclusion, Queensland councils continue to be encouraged by the State Government's ongoing commitment to progress this important agenda and support improved smoking regulation for better health outcomes for Queensland communities. The steps taken will help to protect improved environmental outcomes as well as the health and safety of waste management officers, usually employed by local governments.

Should you require further assistance in relation to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Rudolf Pretzler, Lead – Circular Economy and Energy Policy on [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely,



Alison Smith
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER