

22 June 2022

Legal Affairs and Safety Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

By email only: lasc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Committee,

Queensland Casinos should be smokefree

Cancer Council Queensland welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee (**Committee**) on the *Casino Control and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 (Bill)*.

In 'modernising' and 'strengthening'¹ the regulatory regime for Queensland casinos, the Bill provides an opportunity to address an historical anomaly, where 'premium gaming rooms' are the only public enclosed spaces that are not subject to smokefree laws.

Cancer Council Queensland submits that the Committee should recommend the Bill be amended to remove sub-section 26R(2)(a) of the *Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 (TOSP Act)*, to remove this exclusion and bring these spaces into alignment with all other public enclosed spaces in Queensland.

Tobacco harms

The objects of the *Casino Control Act 1982* include 'minimising the potential for harm from casino gambling' (section 3(2)(c)).

Exposing patrons and workers to tobacco smoke is a harm.

Second-hand tobacco smoke is a known cause of cancer and any level of exposure is unsafe.² Second-hand smoke causes stroke, lung cancer and coronary heart disease in adults.³ Cancer Council Queensland strongly advocates for more Queenslanders and visitors to live and work smoke-free by reducing the community's exposure to second-hand smoke. According to the Australian Department of Health, for every eight smokers who die from a smoking-caused disease, one non-smoker dies from second-hand smoke exposure.⁴

The 2019 National Drug and Household Survey demonstrates strong public support for measures aimed at reducing tobacco-related harm remained high including support for banning smoking in workplaces, pubs and clubs, and other public places.⁵ It is not possible to provide 'adequate ventilation' to remove the toxicants generated by cigarette smoke.⁶

Allowing smoking in 'premium gaming rooms' fails to protect workers and patrons from the harms of second-hand smoke and increases their risk of tobacco-related illnesses such as cancer, heart disease and respiratory conditions.⁷

Smoking in 'premium gaming rooms'

While Queensland laws exempt premium gaming rooms from the general prohibition on smoking in enclosed spaces (contained in Part 2B of the *TOSP Act*), we acknowledge that some of Queensland's casino operators have voluntarily committed to smoke-free indoor environments from 2022.

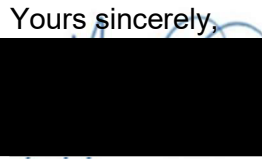
We understand industry may justify the need for continuation of the existing exemption based on a perceived need to appeal to international visitors. However, overseas casino locations such as New Zealand are now smokefree and some Asian jurisdictions are moving to reduce smoking in casinos.⁸

Casinos in Tasmania, the ACT and South Australia do not allow smoking inside their facilities. In late 2021, the WA Minister for Health announced the removal of a smoking exemption for Crown Perth's International Room gaming facility. In his announcement, Minister Roger Cook said '*For more than 22 years we have had widespread smoking bans in Western Australia. There is no good reason to maintain the smoking exemption at Crown's International Room and that is why I proposed to remove it.*'⁹

Cancer Council Queensland encourages the Committee to acknowledge the health harms caused by allowing smoking in premium gaming rooms, and strongly encourages the Committee to recommend removing the exemption for casinos from Queensland's *TOSP Act*.

We would welcome the opportunity to provide more information to the Committee on this issue. The Committee can contact me on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,


[REDACTED]
James Farrell OAM
General Manager, Advocacy
Cancer Council Queensland

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- ¹ Queensland, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 26 May 2022, 1431 (Grace Grace).
- ² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, GA: U.S Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health; 2006.
- ³ Ibid. See also Australian Government Department of Health. *About passive smoking* Canberra: Australian Government Department of Health; 2019. Available from: <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/smoking-and-tobacco/about-smoking-and-tobacco/about-passive-smoking#is-passive-smoking-ever-safe>.
- ⁴ Australian Government Department of Health. *About passive smoking*. 2019. Available from: <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/smoking-and-tobacco/about-smoking-and-tobacco/about-passive-smoking>
- ⁵ Australian Government. *National Drug and Household Survey: Tobacco Smoking*. In: Welfare AloHa, editor. Canberra: Australian Government; 2019.
- ⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Ventilation Does Not Effectively Protect People Who Don't Smoke from Secondhand Smoke*. 2020. Available from https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/secondhand_smoke/protection/ventilation/ind_ex.htm; World Health Organization. *Protection from exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke: policy recommendations*. World Health Organization. 2007. Available from <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/43677>; National Occupational Health & Safety Commission. *Guidance note on the elimination of environmental tobacco smoke in the workplace*. Commonwealth of Australia. 2003. Available from https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/atoms/files/guidancenote_eliminationofenvironme ntaltobaccosmoke_workplace_nohsc3019-2003.pdf.
- ⁷ World Health Organization. *Global Health Observatory (GHO) data - Second-hand smoke* Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization; 2020. Available from: https://www.who.int/gho/phe/secondhand_smoke/en/
- ⁸ Grace C, Tumini V. *Smoking bans in key public areas and environments* Melbourne: Tobacco in Australia: Facts and Issues; 2017. Available from: <https://www.tobaccoinAustralia.org.au/chapter-15-smokefree-environment/15-4-overview-of-key-public-areas-and-environments>. See also Wong S. No break for Macau casinos as government plans full smoking ban. *Bloomberg Business*, 2015. Available from: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-06-30/no-break-for-macau-casinos-as-government-plans-full-smoking-ban>
- ⁹ Hon Roger Cook MLA, 'Smoking to be banned in Crown Perth's International Room area' (Media Statement, 26 November 2021).