



Speech by

**Mr D. BRISKEY**

**MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND**

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Hansard 16 May 2002

**TOBACCO LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mr BRISKEY** (Cleveland—ALP) (12.54 p.m.): As another reformed smoker in this place, I welcome the amendments to the tobacco legislation that we are debating today and wish to speak in strong support of them. The amendments form part of an expansion of the Beattie government's tough new anti-smoking laws and seeks to ban smoking in all bingo venues.

I can well recall as a young fellow going along to bingo halls with my grandmother and sitting in smoke-filled rooms. I am not saying that that made me start smoking, but I am sure that it affected my health.

**Mr Terry Sullivan:** Did it stunt your growth?

**Mr BRISKEY:** It did not stunt my growth. I blame my parents for that. I blame my father for my actually taking up smoking, because after dinner we would sit down and have a smoke together. Thankfully, he does not do that any more, either. It has been 20-something years since I had a smoke.

However, as I said, I commend the minister on this initiative. This legislation will ensure a healthy environment for all bingo players and staff and seeks to even the playing field for all not-for-profit bingo providers who rely on the proceeds of these bingo games to undertake valuable community work. I know many bingo players in my electorate of Cleveland will welcome the amendments, which will come into force at the end of this month.

As the minister has highlighted on a number of occasions, bingo players are often the most senior members of our communities and frequently suffer from chronic lung and respiratory conditions. Having to sit in a room filled with tobacco smoke will only exacerbate their health problems. While some sections of the community and industry may not be supportive of these changes, the government has a responsibility to ensure the health and safety of the majority of citizens. It is well known to every member of this House and to the wider community the health effects of smoking and, of course, of passive smoking and their high cost to our health sector. This legislation will ensure that people, especially those elderly residents who enjoy a game of bingo—which I enjoy myself, but I have not had an opportunity to play for many, many years—can do that in a safe and smoke free environment.

All members would agree that the benefits of these amendments far outweigh any cost. They are another important step in addressing the human and economic costs of smoking. For example, a study revealed that in 1996-97, more than 185,000 hospital bed days were attributed to smoking related conditions, costing Queensland Health over \$108 million. A fax sheet and no smoking signs are available to the community free of charge through the tobacco hotline on 1800 005 998, which has been established to facilitate the introduction of the 2002 amendment bill. It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the minister and commend this bill to the House.

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