




Speech By  
**Hon. Leeanne Enoch**

**MEMBER FOR ALGESTER**

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**TOBACCO AND OTHER SMOKING PRODUCTS (SMOKE-FREE PLACES)  
AMENDMENT BILL; TOBACCO AND OTHER SMOKING PRODUCTS  
(EXTENSION OF SMOKING BANS) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (7.36 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Smoke-free Places) Amendment Bill 2015. The science is in on tobacco smoke and has been for quite some time: directly or indirectly, exposure to tobacco smoke is harmful. Studies released from as early as 1950 outline the inherent dangers associated with smoking. The Cancer Council of Australia says that there is sufficient evidence that smoking is a risk factor for some 16 cancer types. The World Health Organization has attributed almost six million deaths per year since 1964 to tobacco smoking, including those caused by second-hand smoke. That is 336 million people around the world who have died due to inhaling the toxic and carcinogenic chemicals contained in tobacco, either directly or indirectly through passive smoking. A study of 2004 data published in 2010 on the burden of disease from exposure to second-hand smoke found that 600,000 deaths worldwide were attributed to second-hand smoke, making up one per cent of worldwide mortality. Perhaps most alarmingly, the research showed that 28 per cent of those deaths were of children.

Outside of the grim number of deaths directly linked to smoking and repeated exposure to second-hand smoke are the long-term health implications associated with exposure. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States, adults who have never smoked but have been exposed to second-hand smoke have developed health conditions such as heart disease, lung cancer and stroke. In children, second-hand smoke has been linked to an increase in the risk of sudden infant death syndrome, severe asthma attacks and an increase in respiratory infections. Statistics released by the Department for Health and Ageing show that children exposed to environmental tobacco smoke are 40 per cent more likely to suffer from asthma symptoms than children who are not exposed.

While those conditions are personally traumatic—and in this House we have already heard stories of personal experiences with tobacco related cancers—there is also a broader economic impact. It is estimated that the annual social and economic cost of smoking related illnesses in Australia is in the vicinity of \$31.5 billion, which includes medical expenses that of course must be met, either privately or through the public health system, as well as productivity costs to business through lost time due to illness. Many will argue that the chances of developing a severe condition due to passive smoking will depend on the levels of exposure, yet the experts tell us that just one cigarette is doing the smoker harm. Therefore, it must follow that even limited exposure to second-hand smoke must equally be doing harm to those exposed to it. Three of our local governments have done excellent work in creating

smoke-free bus stops, taxi ranks and jetties within their local government areas. However, there are still many Queenslanders who have no choice but to sit or stand at public transport waiting points that are not smoke-free.

There are thousands of Queenslanders every day who are inadvertently exposed to second-hand smoke as they go about their usual business and who are needlessly put in danger of developing health issues. For example, take the student who catches the bus to school every morning. They arrive at the bus stop at the same time every day, congregating with the same people who are going about their daily commute. Every day there are one or two people who might have a cigarette before getting on the bus.

No-one in this student's family smokes, yet because fellow commuters at the bus stop light up a cigarette every morning this child's chances of developing a serious illness are increased through no fault of their own. This bill will help to reduce the chances of exposure to second-hand smoke to Queenslanders, particularly our children, by creating consistent laws across Queensland.

Research has shown all of us that smoke-free legislation can: reduce a person's exposure to tobacco toxins; reduce respiratory symptoms; reduce the amount smoked by current smokers, importantly; and encourage some smokers to quit. Further evidence has shown that consistent smoking bans increase community compliance because they provide people with a clear understanding of where they cannot smoke. Consistent bans also ensure that people in rural and regional communities receive the same protections as those in South-East Queensland.

Public transport waiting points, such as train stations, bus stops and light-rail platforms, would become smoke-free, significantly reducing the chances of passive smoking by the thousands of students who make their way to or from school each day on the public transport system, for instance. The bill will also extend the ban to smoking within 10 metres of a playground to include skate parks, which are obviously very popular for many young people around Queensland, including those in my great electorate of Algester.

Smoking at or in the vicinity of early childhood education and care facilities would also be banned under amendments in the bill—it is similar to the current legislation regarding smoking at or near schools. Similarly, smoking at sporting events for under-age participants would also be banned, providing children with a healthier environment in which to play their chosen sport.

There is not one smoker today who could say that they do not know the personal risk they take by indulging in their habit. There is too much evidence for them to say otherwise. While they are free to take this risk upon themselves, it is incumbent on governments to minimise that risk, especially when it comes to the inadvertent exposure of children to potentially harmful second-hand smoke. This bill provides a consistent statewide approach to smoke-free areas, further reducing the possibility that children around Queensland who have not chosen to take on the risk are exposed to the harmful toxins contained within tobacco smoke.

As I have heard many speakers do tonight, I reflect on my own family circumstances. As a child born in the 1960s and growing up in the 1970s and 1980s, everybody smoked.

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Ms ENOCH:** That is right. My grandmother who lived in Inala had a courier business. On school holidays I would go and stay with my grandmother. I was stuck in a car with my grandmother driving all around Brisbane while she endlessly smoked cigarettes. I remember how physically sick I felt at the end of those days.

**Mr Rickuss:** Did she take Bex as well?

**Ms ENOCH:** Yes, she took Bex as well. That was the norm. My father was a very heavy smoker. As a kid at school I remember being taught about the dangers of smoking and going to my father and saying, 'This is the time to quit.' He was a very stubborn man and continued to smoke throughout his life. Unfortunately, two years ago next month he passed away from lung cancer potentially as a result of smoking but, of course, due to other things he was doing in his life as a bulldozer driver in various quarries.

Children are dealing with and living with parents who smoke and encouraging them not to smoke anymore. I learned some lessons for myself. What we want to see into the future with this piece of legislation is an environment where children are not seeing smoking all the time and are protected from passive smoking and young people do not have the same experience I had of being in a car with my grandmother for days on end during the school holidays while she was chain smoking. We do not want them going to their sporting events and as they come up to the canteen inhaling the tobacco smoke of adults in that area.

This is an important piece of legislation. We have learned the lessons of the last generation. We have learned the lessons about the dangers of tobacco. We do not need to see all the research and look up all the statistics. We know it instinctively. We know that this is not what we want for the future. Although individuals make their own choices, there is a role for government in this. Our role is to ensure that there are places where there is no smoking so that we can secure a safe environment for our children into the future. It is for these reasons, my own experiences and the experiences that have been shared in the House that I commend the bill to the House.