




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2016

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

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.39 pm): I rise to contribute to the cognate debate on the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Smoke-free Places) Amendment Bill and the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Extension of Smoking Bans) Amendment Bill. On 14 July 2015, the LNP Opposition introduced the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Extension of Smoking Bans) Amendment Bill as a private member's bill with a clear view to decreasing the incidence of smoking in Queensland. We know that, whilst the prevalence of smoking has decreased substantially over the past decade, there is always more to be done. In fact, we were concerned that the rate of this decrease had slowed over recent years, indicating that more must be done as quickly as possible.

There is no doubt that smoking has a real impact on our health system and our society, with more than 3,400 Queenslanders dying each year from smoking related illnesses. As a result, our bill sought to strengthen Queensland's tobacco legislation by strengthening and expanding the number of smoke-free places. This included banning smoking within five metres of all state government buildings, banning smoking at all public transport waiting areas and pedestrian malls, swimming pools and skate parks, and banning the sale of cigarettes at pop-up sales venues. Four months later, on 10 November 2015, the Labor government recognised the importance of the provisions of the LNP opposition's private member's bill and introduced a government bill which largely mimics the opposition's bill. As a result, we now have bipartisan support for further legislative action to expand the number of smoke-free places in Queensland and lessen the impact of second-hand smoke.

In the former Health and Ambulance Services Committee's report on the government bill we recommended that the bill be passed. The committee noted that Queensland, as has been the case in other states and territories, has favoured an incremental approach to smoking bans over a number of years, and this legislation continues with this approach. The bill will introduce a new 10-metre smoking prohibition at skate parks and under-age sporting events, decreasing the likelihood of smoking at these often outdoor public events. The bill will also introduce regulations for smoking in national parks. It will ban smoking at national parks or part of a national park with a view to increasing community enjoyment and the safety of visitors to our environmental attractions.

The bill will protect children by expanding smoking bans at early childhood education and care facilities. Previously, education and care services have been required to provide a tobacco-, drug- and alcohol-free environment for their children. Smoking will now be prohibited at early childhood education and care facilities as well as within five metres of the boundaries of these facilities. Smoking within a government precinct will also be prohibited by the bill.

The bill will also prohibit the sale of smoking products from temporary retail stores or pop-up stores. This will bring Queensland in line with other jurisdictions in Australia, as we are currently the only state without a regulatory mechanism to prevent the sale of cigarettes at pop-up outlets. This will also amend existing provisions to ban smoking at public transport waiting points, regulated outdoor pedestrian malls and public swimming facilities between sunrise and sunset. The bill will also give local government the power to prohibit smoking at outdoor public places in local government areas where statewide smoking bans do not apply.

I am proud to be part of the LNP opposition that is taking proactive steps to decrease the prevalence of smoking in Queensland and provide healthier public spaces for the more than 85 per cent of Queenslanders who do not smoke. It is encouraging to see that the Labor government was so impressed by the LNP opposition's proactive policy approach that they have now taken it upon themselves to throw their support behind our proposal in the form of their government bill. I congratulate the shadow minister for health for his good work and for making a difference to the health of everyday Queenslanders.