




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

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TOBACCO AND OTHER SMOKING PRODUCTS AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (4.37 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill. I will briefly explain why this is such an important bill to me, and I think I may have spoken about this before. I have said before that my father passed away from smoking, God bless him. He picked up the habit in the fifties when he was in the Nashos when he was given cartons of free cigarettes, and his habit started from there. At the end, 50 years after that, he had had a stroke, heart disease, blocked carotid arteries, osteoporosis and what eventually got him at the end was bladder cancer, which is one of the most prevalent forms of cancers associated with smoking.

As kids we would beg him. We knew the dangers. We would beg him to stop, but it was only when a heart surgeon said, 'I'm not putting a pacemaker in you until you stop smoking,' that he stopped smoking cold turkey that day. That had mixed feelings for my sisters and me because we had begged him for years, but it was a stranger surgeon who actually got him to stop in one day. He really wanted to meet his grandson, but because of smoking he died a few months before my son Guy was born, and he always regretted that. When my kids say, 'What happened to Pop Richard?', I just say, 'He died, kids, from smoking.' That is brutal for them but they got the idea, and that is the way that hopefully perhaps I have inoculated them against the desire to smoke. Therefore, this is an important bill to me. Whenever I see people smoking I think about what they may miss out on in later life because of their habit.

I welcome many things in this bill and I will go through those. I commend all the retailers and others who pushed for action on this. I can say to them that this is where we have ended up. Look at what we have in the bill before us. This is real action happening. The bill introduces a licensing scheme for the wholesale and retail sale of smoking products: 1,000 penalty units for the unlicensed wholesale or retail sale of smoking products; and 300 penalty units for supplying illicit tobacco, which includes products that do not comply with Commonwealth packaging rules. An authorised person will have expanded enforcement powers, which will be very much welcomed. Those authorities will be able to forfeit or seize products without first taking prosecution action, which I think is a marvellous initiative. Police officers will be authorised persons for the purposes of enforcing the new offences, which is very welcome. I also welcome expanding smoke-free public places to include outdoor markets and prohibiting smoking near organised children's activities and in car parks adjacent to schools. All of those things are incredibly welcome.

I welcome the LNP support for this bill. I have heard a couple of the members—the member for Warrego, for example—say that we have been soft because we have not been enforcing the tobacco regulations. I find that amusing because it is the federal National Party that takes donations from tobacco producers—still, in this day and age. The Liberals stopped in about 2013 and we stopped in 2004. As the member for Pumicestone said—and this will be to the Nationals' eternal shame—they have taken \$245,000 of big tobacco money since 2017. In fact, \$215,000 has come from Philip Morris since 2013. As the member for Bundamba pointed out, a national vaping lobby gave \$44,000 to the

Liberals as a personal gift. While I thank the LNP for supporting the bill, if they truly felt strongly on this issue they would tell their colleagues in Canberra or wherever to stop taking money from big tobacco and vaping—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Order, members! Please resume your seat, member for Bancroft. We are getting towards the end of the day. We do not need this cacophony. I warn members generally that I will issue warnings under the standing orders from now on for those kinds of interjections.

Mr WHITING: The record stands on where the Nationals got their donations from. It is to their eternal shame that they keep taking that money.