




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

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TOBACCO AND OTHER SMOKING PRODUCTS AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (3.58 pm): I rise in support of the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill. Over the last 25 years concerted public health efforts have more than halved adult smoking rates in Queensland. While we have some of the strongest tobacco laws in the world, smoking is still a significant contributor to death, disease and health inequity. Smoking remains the No. 1 preventable cause of death and disease in Queensland. The measures that are contained in this bill will help further reduce smoking rates in Queensland and help better protect the community from second-hand smoke and the illicit tobacco trade.

These reforms will help deliver stronger enforcement action on illicit tobacco sale and supply, with the introduction of a licensing scheme for the sale of tobacco. We have heard from other speakers that this is widely supported. Certainly that was the feedback from the consultation that was undertaken in relation to this bill and from stakeholders. Importantly, these reforms also include the expansion of smoke-free areas and tougher restrictions on cigarette sales in licensed venues.

Under these reforms, Queensland Health will be established as the lead agency to enforce the measures and crack down on people who sell illicit tobacco and ensure that only fit and proper people are licensed to sell tobacco products. Queensland Health officials will have the support of police for investigative and enforcement activities. I know that some members' contributions, particularly those of members opposite, have gone to the issue of enforcement resources. This addresses that directly along with the record number of frontline health staff that we have in Queensland thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government. There will be more on the way because this is a government that backs our frontline health workers and does not sack them.

Currently, the framework that exists to crack down on illegal operators requires participation from multiple agencies across different levels of government. These new laws are going to streamline the response from authorities to help keep illegal tobacco off our streets.

As I mentioned, the bill expands the number of smoke-free public places to help protect people from the harms of second-hand smoke. With these reforms what we will see is that Queensland is going to continue to be a national leader when it comes to effective measures around tobacco control. It is through these reforms that we are continuing to deliver on our commitment to take stronger action against smoking.

Our policies and laws have been effective to date, with smoking rates continuing to drop in Queensland, but we cannot rest on our laurels. We must do more. With these stronger compliance and enforcement measures, agencies will be able to get on with the job of reducing access to illegal tobacco. We are delivering on the reforms that stakeholders have said that they need to be able to take further action to help reduce smoking rates. These reforms are the result of extensive consultation with key stakeholders and people who are engaged in making sure that we have an appropriate tobacco regulatory environment. That includes small businesses, public health agencies, retailers and hospitality businesses. It has been in partnership and in consultation with all of these stakeholders that this reform package has been designed and is now before the parliament.

The contribution from the member for Pumicestone did raise some concerning issues around the links between the tobacco industry and the federal National Party. The Labor Party stopped taking donations from the tobacco industry almost 20 years ago. I acknowledge that the Queensland LNP are on the public record as saying that they do not accept donations from the tobacco industry. I do not doubt the authenticity of the contributions from those opposite in the LNP when it comes to their support for this bill.

However, like the member for Pumicestone, I would encourage those members to raise with their federal counterparts the issue of accepting donations from the tobacco industry. There was a concerning report from the ABC in June last year which found that the national vaping lobby group 'donated a total of \$44,000 to the Liberal Party but the money was declared as personal gifts from its director on electoral returns'. I table that article.

Tabled paper: Article from *ABC News*, dated 28 June 2022, titled "'Personal' donations to the Liberal Party came from vaping lobby during debate over policy" [701](#).

These links are directly relevant to the debate that we are having. When we raise the issue of tobacco control in the regulatory and legal environment in Queensland—and those laws and policies obviously exist and work with federal policies and laws—this is a serious issue and it needs to be ventilated and discussed. In late March this year the Public Health Association of Australia put out a media statement in relation to the federal National's policy, that the member for Pumicestone referred to, supporting vapes where it detailed over \$200,000 worth of direct donations from tobacco company Philip Morris. I table that media statement from the Public Health Association of Australia.

Tabled paper: Media article, dated 21 March 2023, titled 'Nationals' policy will increase the vaping problem. Their history of receiving tobacco industry money means they're irrelevant in any vaping discussion: PHAA' [702](#).

I reiterate that I would ask the members of the Queensland LNP to not only take the action of supporting this legislation because it is good legislation that will improve the health of Queenslanders, but take action by talking to their federal Liberal and National counterparts to stop accepting donations of the tobacco lobby.

Queensland's adult smoking rate has more than halved over the last 20 years yet we know that smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease, with one in five cancers attributed to tobacco use. There are many members in the chamber right now across all parties who have an orange heart on their lapels from Palliative Care Queensland in acknowledgement of Palliative Care Week. I doubt that anybody in this place has not been touched in some way by the reality of life-limiting conditions. It puts into sharp focus the importance of the reforms that we are debating today as we enter into Palliative Care Week. I acknowledge every single palliative care worker, particularly in my electorate of Bundamba, but right throughout Queensland. They do an absolutely amazing job.

Too many people in Queensland die from preventable deaths due to smoking. We have to do what we can to continue to reduce rates of smoking and we must do everything possible to ensure that the next generation does not get hooked on smoking products. These reforms are essential as we continue to drive down smoking rates in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.