




Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Linard**

**MEMBER FOR NUDGE**

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## **TOBACCO AND OTHER SMOKING PRODUCTS AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (12.28 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution in support of the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. I start by thanking the Health and Environment Committee chair, the member for Thuringowa. We spent many years together on the health committee. We all know how passionate he is about health. I thank the other members of the Health and Environment Committee for their examination of the bill. I also thank the organisations and individuals who made written submissions on the bill and appeared at the public hearings.

I note that the committee made three recommendations, including that the bill be passed. An objective of the bill is to strengthen, modernise and futureproof the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act. This is something that I very strongly support. Despite decades of research and community discussion about the effects of smoking, it remains a significant public health concern. Smoking is still, as many in this House have said, the No. 1 risk factor contributing to preventable death and disease in our state with the annual cost of smoking, including hospital and medical expenses, being estimated at some \$27.4 billion. While it is encouraging that over the past 25 years the rate of smoking among adults living in Queensland has more than halved, in recent years we have seen tobacco companies engaging in aggressive new marketing of smoking products to young people, including the promotion of new and so-called safer smoking products such as e-cigarettes. We have also seen new and questionable business practices emerge designed to circumvent the protections in the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act and we have seen an increasing trade in illicit tobacco.

I have spoken in this House a number of times over the years about how close to my heart this matter is—that is smoking in our community. I watched my grandmother, who never smoked a day in her life, die an incredibly painful death due to the passive smoking of my grandfather. I also lost both of my parents at far too young an age from non-preventable forms of cancer. I have always struggled and will never be able to understand why anyone would willingly choose such a potential death or the many health concerns that come with the habit. Of course, I am sympathetic to addiction. I understand tobacco is incredibly addictive. I have seen what it does to others' health and, as I said, the painful repercussions of it have been extraordinary in my life and my family's life.

In my previous role as chair of the health, communities, disability services, domestic and family violence prevention committee which conducted an inquiry into tobacco licensing arrangements in Queensland, the committee made a number of recommendations that I have been very passionate about. We have continued important reform in this area, including implementing a positive wholesale and retail tobacco licensing scheme while giving weight to appropriate licensing fees and avoiding unnecessary regulatory red tape. There was always an attempt to balance those things but, in 2020, our government made two very significant election commitments: firstly, to strengthen the retail supply, advertising and promotion provisions in the act and to take direct action on illicit tobacco; and, secondly, to increase smoke-free public places. We have always reformed in this space because we understand

the health benefits of doing so. We understand the important benefits to the health system and the load that smoking, unavoidable illness and death has on the system. We also understand the importance of protecting children in public places and vulnerable young people.

For me, seeing this legislation introduce and expand those smoke-free public spaces, including community spaces for children, is really important. As a mother of two young boys I go out of my way to keep my boys in smoke-free places. One is an asthmatic. Recently we took my children to the Red Hot Chilli Peppers where a number of individuals who were vaping at that point—

**An honourable member:** Cool kids.

**Ms LINARD:** They are cool kids, thank you. I take that interjection. They loved it, and it was a great night. However, they were smoked on the whole time. As a parent, I find that deeply offensive. While I appreciate that some may say, 'The science is out', the science is very to clear me. Smoking has a significant impact on health. In terms of the conversation that we had with the Marlborough man and the amazing advertising in the seventies where smoking itself became a reflection of being connected to others and being social, I do not want to see that same mantra creep in with young people in the community thinking that it is something it is not. It is absolutely something affecting health. I was so glad to see an inquiry under the member for Thuringowa and the committee that will have an honest conversation about an issue that is prolific across community. We are having that frank conversation because we need to. Let's actually bring the science to light. Let's make sure that young people know and understand—I appreciate that it was an adult smoking on my children at that festival—the cost to community and that we take some strong action.

I appreciate that the federal government has made some strong statements in this regard, too, about the importation of these products and their illegal sale, but I am also heartened that the next generation of Queenslanders is clearly aware of the dangers of smoking. At my recent Nudgee electorate Youth Advisory Council meeting, we had a really frank conversation about vaping. They ranged from school children up to adults. They were really frank about how it is marketed to them. There is still work to do there, but it is essential that governments continue to work to protect the community. I believe this bill does that. I believe we have always had a record of reform in this space. I look forward to the outcomes of the health committee's inquiry into e-cigarettes and vaping. I thank them again for these important amendments. I am very proud to be a member of a government that continues to take steps to protect the community from the dangers of smoking and unnecessary deaths. I commend the bill to the House.