




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

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TOBACCO AND OTHER SMOKING PRODUCTS AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (4.25 pm): I rise to support the latest tobacco and smoking reforms under this government. It is a little-known fact that as a 16-year-old one of my first political acts was to join the non-smokers' movement in Queensland. From a personal point of view, my father was a tobacco addict who smoked three packets a day. He was a chain smoker who, unsurprisingly, died early at 60 from throat cancer. It is a terrible way to die. Smoking is something that is very damaging to people's health. I am proud to be part of a government that is acting in this regard. We have to keep policy contemporary to the circumstances. Obviously, vaping is a new form of pushing nicotine and addiction. It may not have some of the health disbenefits but it certainly causes a lot of addiction, particularly amongst our younger generation. We have to keep health prevention in our community in check, and this bill does that. I am very proud to support the minister and be part of a government that is improving protections from tobacco addiction via this bill.

We know the harm that smoking causes to people's health, in particular the health of close family members and the broader health of our community. Reducing rates of smoking and addiction in Queensland, especially for young Queenslanders, is an important reform and one that I support to develop a healthier community so people can lead better and longer lives, because that is the inevitable outcome of less smoking and less addiction to nicotine.

It is a fact that action on smoking in Australia over the last 40 years has been one of the quiet success stories in health policy. When I was growing up, one in two adults smoked. Often there were no provisions, no restrictions. You would get gassed when you flew on a plane or entered any kind of venue. You used to hang up your clothes when you got home to air them out before the next morning. It was absolutely foul and terrible. To now see smoking levels at 11 per cent of the population—and we want to see that go down even further—is a significant health success in terms of policy over the last four decades. You really see that when you travel to Europe, for example, where you see other countries that are way behind Australia. Passive and second-hand smoke is still a normal part of going into restaurants and bars in some countries. The fact that Australia is one of the leading countries to bring smoking rates down per capita is something that many governments and leaders over time should be proud of.

This amendment will improve the monitoring of the tobacco industry and crack down on the illegal selling of tobacco products within our communities. There is absolutely no doubt that smoking kills, and we must ensure that when Queenslanders are going out to enjoy their lifestyle they should not be exposed to second-hand smoke.

This bill expands those smoke-free spaces to include outdoor markets, which are very common and popular in our current culture. They are good places but nobody wants to be breathing in second-hand smoke as they are buying their vegetables, grabbing a coffee or buying something at the

markets. They should be free from that smoke and this bill is promoting that, especially for young children who are at outdoor markets on their own or with parents. They should not be subjected to that as well.

The bill also improves protections for other areas where children gather through new smoke-free buffer zones both inside and outside eating and drinking venues. This government knows how important it is to stop children from accessing smoking products and exposure to second-hand smoke. This bill will remove exemption from liability for an adult or a guardian supplying smoking products to a child, and that is a positive thing. We do not want to see adults encouraging the uptake of smoking in young Queenslanders by giving them access to products that we know can lead to a lifelong addiction and health complications.

Educating Queenslanders, especially young Queenslanders, of the health impacts from smoking and vaping will help divert a lot of people away from the addictive substances. We need to respond to the new strategies that are being used to get people into nicotine addiction not via smoking but via vaping. No longer will you be able to smoke near organised activities where young Queenslanders are out and about enjoying their lifestyle or at car parks near their schools. Children are great mimickers. They will often look to adults for cues about what is normal and not normal, and what we want to see is them not adopting smoking as a default.

It was this side of the House that implemented the smoke-free places across Queensland, and I am proud of the Palaszczuk government for showing leadership on that. This will go further to make more places smoke-free right across Queensland because smoking around young people especially is unacceptable. This bill strengthens our already tough laws. A range of speakers have spoken about other aspects of the bill so I am not about to repeat those. I am proud to support this bill. It is something that I am personally very passionate about. I am very proud that this government is legislating in this regard. I thank all members who will vote for this bill.