




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 24 August 2023

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Vaping

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.55 am): As we have heard from the Premier and the education minister, it is no secret that vaping is becoming increasingly prevalent amongst young people. More than one in five Queenslanders aged 18 to 24 have used a vape. The rate is one in six for those aged 15 to 17. With flavours like cotton candy, watermelon and mango, this is no coincidence. Vape manufacturers are clearly targeting their products at young people with the intention of getting them hooked.

Many vapes contain huge amounts of nicotine but, alarmingly, given the work of our parliamentary committee and Queensland Health, we know that they also contain a deadly cocktail. Chemicals like lead, formaldehyde and arsenic are in these products. To put it into perspective, a single vape contains 4,000 puffs. A single vape is the equivalent of 400 cigarettes. Just imagine what one puff, let alone 4,000 puffs, could do to the lungs of a child. Enough is enough. Our government will not stand by and let the next generation—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms FENTIMAN: I would have thought the families in their electorates would be really interested to hear about what we are doing to restrict vapes in the community. We will not stand by and let the next generation become addicted to nicotine and vaping and expose our health system to further unnecessary burdens. That is why we have already taken strong action earlier this year by: passing stronger new tobacco laws; carrying out raids, coordinated with—

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Southern Downs, you are warned.

Ms FENTIMAN:—Australian Border Force, which have seized millions of dollars of illegal tobacco products and over 54,000 vapes; and rolling out a \$5 million anti-vaping program in our schools. These are important steps, but we must also break the habits at the source. That is why today we are launching a new \$1.3 million public health awareness campaign aimed at 12- to 17-year-olds. This campaign has been co-designed with young Queenslanders from across Queensland. 'There's Nothing Sweet About Vapes' will communicate the health risks and the toxic chemicals inside vapes directly to young people. As the Premier has explained, it will target the platforms where young people are—Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, Spotify and Twitch—as well as use traditional advertising at our bus stops and on outdoor billboards. A new website has also been launched to help young people understand how dangerous this is but also to provide parents and guardians with the resources they need.

The health risks of vaping cannot be underestimated. For too long vape manufacturers have run rampant, peddling their poisonous products to children. I am proud that we are taking strong action to keep Queenslanders safe, to educate them about the danger of vaping and to keep retailers accountable for the products they sell, because there is nothing sweet about vapes.