




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Record of Proceedings, 17 April 2024

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.31 pm): Cancer, COPD, heart disease, stroke, asthma, birth and fetal impacts, diabetes: I have seen more people die of these diseases than I care to remember, member for Southern Downs, so how dare you sit in this place and tell me that I do not—

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Members, I have just given a direction not to argue across the chamber. Member for Greenslopes, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Southern Downs, you are warned under the standing orders. I will not tolerate that behaviour again from either of you.

Mr KELLY: How dare the member for Southern Downs stand in this place and accuse me of not caring and not taking this issue seriously.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, you are under a warning. You will leave the chamber for an hour. Member for Greenslopes, you have the call but I am listening closely.

Whereupon the honourable member for Southern Downs withdrew from the chamber at 2.32 pm.

Mr KELLY: How dare the member stand in this place and say those things when I have devoted my entire working career since the age of 18 to the area of health and community welfare in one way, shape, form or another. Tobacco and all of its products are an absolute scourge on our society. If I could get rid of them all right now or if I could have gotten rid of them 35 or 36 years ago when I started, I would have done that because we would have seen a lot fewer people impacted and a lot fewer people die. What we need in relation to this very serious public health matter is not people coming in here and playing ridiculous political games. This is a public health issue. One of the ways that we have been very successful in responding to tobacco and reducing its use from when I started my nursing career from about 80 per cent of people smoking down to what it was a few years ago—about 10 per cent—was by having sensible evidence-based policies that were broadly supported across the political spectrum, not by people coming in here and using a public health issue to attempt to gain political points against a rival. That is what we have seen here today from speaker after speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Greenslopes, I have given you a direction. Please stick to the report and move on. The other member has been ejected already.

Mr KELLY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am talking to the report.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Greenslopes, you are on a slippery slope if you are reflecting on the chair. I am trying to calm the chamber down, so please move on with your contribution.

Mr POWER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In the free exercise of a debate, when a previous member has made an address, those points can be debated by other members.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Logan. I have taken that into account already and I have given the member a direction. As I said, I am trying to calm the chamber down. I am sure the member for Greenslopes understands where I am going with this, so, member for Greenslopes, you have the call.

Mr KELLY: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I will continue talking to the report. This is a public health issue and the committee has done an exceptionally good job of looking into this matter and I have to say that the report does represent what I think is a bipartisan way forward. The reality is that since this inquiry and since this report was initiated there have been multiple changes in this policy area at the state, federal, council and local government level. It is difficult to confine your comments within this because this is not a point in time issue and it will never be a point in time issue. We have to have a multi-government level response to this issue. I can tell the House that the community want this. The community absolutely support this. I have never engaged in an issue that has been so widely and broadly supported by people. People have responded to community surveys, they have contacted my office, they have raised concerns and they have raised issues, and I have listened to all of those issues.

The things contained in this report certainly are seeking and speaking to the things that those people are raising, because we know that, even if you do not have anything in a vape, sucking superheated moisturised air into your lungs hundreds and hundreds of times a day will damage your lungs. They are simply not designed for that. We know that you are not just sucking in superheated air with moisture in it; you are sucking in superheated air with moisture in it and chemicals. You are creating the perfect storm and the perfect environment for microbes and a whole range of other chemicals to get into your lungs and do significant damage. These are serious chemicals. It is extremely distressing, and the parents in my community are extremely distressed that there is such a broad range of young people who are engaging in this. I accept that older people are vaping, too.

As a society and at every level of government across the board we should be accepting that we have failed here. We have allowed people to hoodwink us into thinking that this would somehow help with smoking cessation. You tell me: when does someone sell a smoking cessation product that tastes like fairy floss with a clown picture on a fluoro coloured thing to a 10-year-old and seriously say that they are engaging in smoking cessation activities? That is a completely and utterly ridiculous notion. These are evil people behind this trade. They are out there trying to addict the next generation to whatever tobacco product they can get them to suck into their lungs and damage them. We need to work together, not fight with one another. If anybody doubts my credibility and sincerity on this issue, I am happy to have that conversation with them inside or outside this chamber. We need to end this.