



Speech By


Hon. Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 16 September 2025

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Illicit Smoking Products

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.41 am): Healing Labor's health crisis and cracking down on crime are key components of the LNP Crisafulli government's actions, and have been for the last 10 months. After a decade of decline under Labor, Queensland Health is now taking strong action to shut illegal chop-chop shops for three months. Landlords will be empowered to kick out dodgy tenants who are caught selling illicit tobacco and vapes.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: We are off to a bad start. We are going to start on a warning list very early, I can tell.

Mr NICHOLLS: These new powers in the dismantling illegal trade bill will be introduced later today and are the latest instalment in the Crisafulli government's nation-leading crackdown on this dangerous black market. Queenslanders know that under Labor those illegal operators were allowed to flourish, operating in main streets and strip shops the length and breadth of the state. Hundreds of illegal stores operated in plain sight, selling dangerous and addictive products to our kids; in effect, dealing death under those opposite. As a result the vaping rate—

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to your ruling in respect of ministerial statements. On 24 June this year, you instructed the House that ministerial statements should be temperate in language. I submit to you that the health minister's language is not in accordance with your ruling. I would ask you to rule whether or not he is acting in accordance with standing order 62.

Mr SPEAKER: In regard to the point of order, I have listened to the Minister intently. He is talking to matters that are directly under his portfolio in his statement so, Minister, you have the call.

Mr NICHOLLS: Hundreds of illegal stores operated in plain sight selling dangerous and addictive products to our kids. As a result, the vaping rate amongst Queensland's high-schoolers tripled and honest, small and family businesses suffered while the crooks cheated the system right under their very noses.

Under Labor's existing laws, Queensland Health enforcement officers are only able to shut down illegal stores for three days—no more than a mild inconvenience—a long weekend for those illegal operators and criminals. Under our new laws this will increase to three months, significantly disrupting operations and profit generation.

We are also supporting honest landlords by giving them clear statutory powers to terminate a lease when their tenant is stocking and selling illegal tobacco and vapes. However, not every landlord acts in good faith. Those who are part of this criminal network, or those who choose to turn a blind eye, will face new criminal and civil penalties with prison terms of up to a year and fines of over \$800,000.

The Crisafulli government's crackdown on illegal chop-chop shops has been welcomed by the very landlords dealing with the legacy of Labor's failures. The CEO of the Shopping Centre Council of Australia said that the new laws are 'strong, clear and will give landlords the backing and protections they need'. He also went on to say, 'These laws will be a model for other jurisdictions.' Cancer Council Queensland have said, 'These reforms are essential to safeguard decades of progress and tobacco control and ensure stronger protections for Queensland communities.'

It is time to stop the game of Whac-A-Mole and start cutting illegal chop-chop shops off at the knees. That is what these new laws will do. We are pulling out all the stops to help keep our kids safe and to support honest business operators. We are hitting illegal sellers harder and closing them for longer. When they get a closure notice, closed means closed. We are empowering honest landlords to give them the boot and we will punish those landlords who do not. This is about shutting down the illegal tobacco racket which has put our kids at risk for far too long. This is about delivering for Queensland.