



Minister for Health and
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Member for Woodridge

4 JUN 2015

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Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie *Neil,*

I write in response to your letter to my predecessor regarding petition number 2338-14, tabled in Parliament on 25 November 2014, in relation to regulating personal vapourisers (commonly called electronic cigarettes) as smoking products.

The petition draws to the attention of the House the position of signatories that personal vapourisers are not smoking products and are harm-reduction alternatives to regular tobacco cigarettes. Petitioners recommend a review of proposed amendments to the *Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998* (Tobacco Act) in regard to personal vapourisers.

No electronic cigarette currently on the market has been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for safety, quality or efficacy as a quit smoking aid. In addition, there is evidence that users of electronic cigarettes continue to use tobacco cigarettes, therefore reducing benefits from quitting. There are many legal, TGA approved nicotine replacement therapy products available to assist smokers to quit. If in the future, electronic cigarette products receive TGA approval, then they may be legally purchased and used by smokers for the purpose of assisting smoking cessation. Should this occur, their purchase and use, however, would be required to be in accordance with laws recently passed by the Queensland Parliament.

The Queensland Parliament passed amendments to the Tobacco Act on 26 November 2014 to regulate personal vapourisers in the same manner as regular cigarettes. This means that from 1 January 2015, these devices cannot be used in existing no-smoking indoor and outdoor public places; sold to children less than 18 years of age; or advertised, promoted or displayed in retail outlets. The legislative reforms are in response to increasing use of these products (including in existing no-smoking indoor and outdoor areas) and potential risks to health. There is also a concern that widespread and visible use of such products in public places may promote their popularity among young people, and encourage the uptake of regular tobacco products.

It cannot be assumed that the vapour produced has no health effects, either from direct inhalation into the lungs, or from second-hand consumption. In addition, these products are designed to mimic the act of smoking, with many devices being similar in appearance to cigarettes.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cameron Dick", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

CAMERON DICK

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services