

VAPING

There's no doubt that the use of e-cigarettes, or vaping, has become a serious concern for our community, especially for the health of our children and young people.

Vaping is visibly prevalent in our community – it's not hard to spot them in our pubs, on our streets and most alarmingly in our schools.

That's why our Government is taking action to stamp it out, with nation-leading reforms to significantly reduce the use and uptake of e-cigarettes.

We supported a national approach on this issue, along with all other States and Territories. In April of this year I publicly welcomed the united front presented by all Australian Health Ministers as we agreed in unison to enact coordinated action on vaping to protect young Australians.

Disappointingly, the Federal Government capitulated to the Greens and compromised this approach with their watered down legislation that doesn't go far enough to protect our kids.

Under the Federal legislation, adults over the age of 18 will be able to acquire a vape from a pharmacy without a prescription. Children and young people under the age of 18 will be able to access a vape from a pharmacy with a prescription.

It also effectively turned pharmacies into vape shops, with limited clinical oversight. Pharmacists have been rightly outraged.

We do not agree with the Federal Labor Government's legislation and we are taking action to resolve it, with legislation introduced to Parliament this week.

Tasmania has long been disproportionately impacted by tobacco use for generations, placing significant pressure on our healthcare system.

Approximately 500 Tasmanians die as a result of smoking and related illnesses every single year.

We cannot allow yet another generation of Tasmanians to be so heavily impacted by nicotine addiction.

Our plan will ban the sale of vape products for children and young people under 18 years, with or without a prescription and ensure e-cigarettes can only be supplied by pharmacies to people 18 years or over with a prescription.

We have worked closely with relevant stakeholders who are seeing the impacts of vaping on our community, and I thank them for their input into these strong preventative health measures and as a result, here in Tasmania we are acting to implement a nation-leading approach to stamping out vaping in our communities.

These reforms complement our multi-faceted approach to tackling smoking rates in Tasmania – and importantly, works to mitigate what could become a damaging lifelong habit for our young people.

I want Tasmania to be the healthiest it can be.

Earlier this year, our Government released the new Tasmanian Drug Strategy 2024-2029, as part of our broader response to reduce the harms associated with the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

It takes a health-focused, strengths-based approach and encourages collaborative action and activities across agencies, organisations, and the community.

Our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future is driving steady progress towards this goal, but by putting in these strong, preventative public health measures we can put in place a healthier future.