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# Submission to Tobacco Harm Reduction Committee

Department of the Senate  
Select Committee on Tobacco Harm Reduction  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

This submission is Public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this critical issue.

My name is Ally Danielsen from Redcliffe Queensland. I am 49 years old and I smoked for 35 years.

I tried to quit smoking 2 times, using:

- Prescription Medicine (eg Champix)
- Cold Turkey

But vaping is the only method that worked for me. I have saved between \$0 - \$2,500 by switching to vaping.

I DO NOT support a prescription-only model to obtain liquid nicotine.

I smoked for a very long time and then only through vaping was I able to quit (after a hospitalisation). I was able to stop smoking for about a year and then I started smoking again. Faced with the medical issues I had and the amount of money I was spending on smokes I decided to stop again with vaping. For me it was an easy and favourable transition. Being able to source nicotine juice meant I wasn't taking any medications and was able to supply it when and from where I chose. I wasn't spending as much money (nowhere near as much), it doesn't make me smell of cigarettes, the skin on my fingers isn't going yellow from nicotine, my house and car no longer stink so are places my family like going now, it doesn't give me all those chemicals and carcinogens which can cause irreversible damage and terminal diseases. If I was to smoke cigarettes again I would have trouble living the life I have now. Food would be an issue, paying bills would become a problem as would my health. It worked for me and I know of many others in my position.

For a start I wouldn't have the option of sourcing it when and where I wanted. I could no longer choose the type I wanted or shop around for price or size. Regulating the purchasing of nicotine causes many problems, and not just for me personally. It overloads our medical centres with 'non urgent' appointments and I'm sure my GP does not want to be writing scripts for or ordering nicotine. It makes it so we vapers have no autonomy over our usage, which smokers do have. It doesn't make any sense to me on any level. If the government wants more control over it why not tax it and be done with it? Most people I've spoken to would much prefer that to this. Vapers are still voters and we still have rights. Doing this takes away most of them. The rushed in and sneaky ban in July was not the way to do this. Ask us how we can work with you and we will. Don't just treat us like children and cut off our supply of nicotine. Or treat us like criminals for something we haven't done. We want to vape and for many of us it saved our lives, and the lives of those around us. Work with us to come to the best and most rational solution. We're not criminals and what we do isn't bad. We just ask for respect and consultation. If we have to pay tax and retain our autonomy so be it. I want to be able to choose what type of nicotine and in what size for myself and from where I buy it.

Sincerely,

Ally Danielsen

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Department of the Senate  
Select Committee on Tobacco Harm Reduction  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

This submission is Public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this critical issue.

My name is Bronwyn Patterson from Magill South Australia. I am 63 years old and I smoked for 49 years.

I tried to quit smoking 10 times, using:

- Cold Turkey
- Nicotine Patches
- Nicotine Gum
- Nicotine Lozenges
- Hypnotherapy
- Acupuncture

But vaping is the only method that worked for me. I have saved between \$12,501 - \$15,000 by switching to vaping.

I DO NOT support a prescription-only model to obtain liquid nicotine.

Im 63yrs old and have smoked since I was 12yrs old. Despite several short breaks and numerous nicotine replacement therapies, abstinence was never achieved. Three years ago a friend introduced me to vaping. I researched the pros and cons and immediately recognised the benefits of giving up cigarettes so decided to try vaping nicotine. My health has improved significantly. I no longer suffer frequent bouts of bronchitis. My clothes, hair, house and car dont smell of cigarettes. Most importantly I dont spend \$40 per day for cigarettes (price 3 years ago, would be \$50 daily in 2020 at least) I was living in poverty as cigarettes came before food and bills. Im most concerned about the proposed Government Regulation! Individuals are powerless to prevent the negative impact on their lives and the loss of freedom of choice. Nicotine vaping is not an illness. I will be forced, unnecessarily, to see my GP when I am not sick. The Health System is already overwhelmed. GPs are rushing through patient appointments. The cost will increase significantly paying for GP visits and script. There will be limited choice of products and replacement parts. The Nicotine will be controlled and rationed at the level that a GP prescribes, the are not specialists. Those Australians currently vaping will have their freedom of choice eliminated. Cigarette smokers will be less likely to cease smoking with the assistance of vaping. Many vapers will return to cigarette smoking if they can no longer access vaping products. If this proposal is passed, I will be committing a criminal offence to use my vape and supply of nicotine. Why? Individuals importing products for vaping will be treated the same way as heroin importers. The proposal crushes the rights of adult Australians, it will criminalize vaping, lead to legal proceedings, fines and criminal offence records that will impact my ability to gain work. Sadly, these proposals will negatively impact hundreds of thousands of Australians, including me.

I will continue to use my vape and nicotine products despite being illegal. When supplies run out I will probably buy cigarettes

Sincerely,

Bronwyn Patterson

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PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

This submission is Public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this critical issue.

My name is Chris Ryan from Kingswood New South Wales. I am 45 years old and I smoked for 31 years.

I tried to quit smoking 10 times, using:

- Cold Turkey
- Nicotine Patches
- Nicotine Gum
- Mobile App

But vaping is the only method that worked for me. I have saved between \$5,001 - \$7,500 by switching to vaping.

I DO NOT support a prescription-only model to obtain liquid nicotine.

I was a pack a day smoker from the age of 13. As I got into my early 20s I would be visiting a doctor 3-4 times a month with breathing problems due to either pneumonia, pleurisy or chest infections. Last year leading up to June I was visiting my family doctor up to 3 times a fortnight for various problems with my lungs due to smoking including my lower lobes in both lungs being partially collapsed. My doctor told me I had to make a decision on trying to quit smoking or my health would get much worse. I read up on the world of vaping, did my research and visited my local vaping store. The guys there were super friendly and extremely helpful. They set me up with my vape machine, vape juice and how to safely order superior quality nicotine liquid. Once it arrived they taught me how to safely handle, work out the right amount of nicotine liquid to vape juice ratio and how to safely store the nicotine liquid and keep it out of children's reach. They then showed me how use my vape machine and a year later I have not looked back. Since starting vaping I have only had to see my doctor 4 times...yes 4 times in a year just for regular check ups. I have not once been sick with any lung complaints let alone much else and I owe all of it to quitting cigarettes and taking up vaping as an alternative nicotine replacement.

I would abide by the law as long as it was fair. There is no use regulating something if it is not fair on each individual and their own requirements.

Sincerely,

Chris Ryan

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Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

This submission is Public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this critical issue.

My name is John Gordon from Alstonville New South Wales. I am 66 years old and I smoked for 48 years.

I tried to quit smoking 10 times, using:

- Cold Turkey
- Nicotine Patches
- Nicotine Gum

But vaping is the only method that worked for me. I have saved between \$15,001 + by switching to vaping.

I DO NOT support a prescription-only model to obtain liquid nicotine.

I had tried many times to give up smoking, but I wasn't successful until I discovered Vaping. I transferred to vaping with none of the previous withdrawal symptoms experienced. It was a very painless transition and my health has improved, I have even been complimented on my aftershave! (Never happened before), and although being forced to vape in the designated Smoking areas puts me back in harms way with second hand smoke, I have not been tempted to go back to cigarettes. I firmly believe that Vaping is a safer alternative than smoking and that Smokers should be encouraged to transfer as it is safer for their health, safer for the community, and cleaner for the environment. There is a lot of scare-mongering about vaping, but some people have lost sight of the benefits, Vaping is SAFER than Cigarettes, no-one has said it is completely safe, but it is several magnitudes safer than tobacco. I do not believe that vaping will lead to increased tobacco use, and most Vapers are ex-smokers. America had issues, but that was predominantly because of unregulated or backyard e-liquid production. People also forget that it is NOT nicotine that is the problem, it is the smoke from burning tobacco leaves, transition to Vaping - no more plethora of carcinogenic by-products.

This would probably force me back on to cigarettes.

Sincerely,

John Gordon

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PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

This submission is Public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this critical issue.

My name is John Williamson from Busselton Western Australia. I am 35 years old and I smoked for 19 years.

I tried to quit smoking 5 times, using:

- Prescription Medicine (eg Champix)
- Cold Turkey
- Nicotine Patches
- Nicotine Gum
- Nicotine Sprays
- Nicotine Lozenges
- Mobile App

But vaping is the only method that worked for me. I have saved between \$10,001 - \$12,500 by switching to vaping.

I DO NOT support a prescription-only model to obtain liquid nicotine.

I smoked for 15 years and quit pretty much from the day I was introduced to vaping. Vaping has not only helped me Medically as I was at least a pack a day smoker, it also helped my mental health, finances and my general standard of living. After being introduced to vaping by my cousin I bought a few juices from an undisclosed buyer from a car boot in Perth as this was pre-vape shops in every other suburb, the quality and circumstances where less than to be desired. Within a Month I had found myself a local home vendor here in Busselton that had sourced a number of more reputable products and all the information I could need to keep me on my Vape Journey. I sort of skirted the Australian vape scene for a couple of years sometimes offering my support in sales, time and love for a Harm reduction method that had worked so well for me. At the same time, I came out of my slump as a person, I started making friends in the local and Australian vape community. My story seemed common, Vaping had offered us not just a smoking quitting method but a support group, Friends and a sense of belonging. Fast forward till the start of this year and my same original home vendor has opened a store here in Busselton. My quit journey has led me to now not just a support system but now a job. I had never worked retail in my life and had no intention to, Vaping was once again assisting me as a person to overcome my social anxieties and insecurities to stand before strangers and provide them the same information and assistance that had been so helpful to me. Nearly a year on again I go to work every day confident in knowing I'm helping people, helping them with the same knowledge, assistance and mainly a supportive ear to people seeking information or starting out on their own Quit journey. To further extend some interesting information I have obtained from my 12 months of working in a vape store plus 3 years of vaping in general: Most Vape stores that I have visited in my own state and communicated with interstate are completely self-regulated and follow these general rules without any current state regulation; - Bottle shop mentality: All young and underage looking customers are required to provide identification to prove they are 18+ - Young Customers 18 to 25 are usually questioned as to their interest to vape and if for any other intention than as a smoking cessation method they are usually persuaded that vaping is not a fad or something to look cool and that it should only really be used for smoking cessation. - NO Sale of Nicotine It has also done wonders for my own Self Esteem as for the first time in a long time Vaping has offered me some amount of financial security both through my job and the cost of vaping vs smoking. As you can see vaping is deeply personal to me and to Summarize if vaping is heavily regulated or made illegal I fear it will not just affect my health as I may relapse back to smoking cigarettes, I also fear for my job, income, Mental health as well as the devastating effect to every vaper in this country and every smoker that has yet to find vaping as a way to quit.

Chances are I would go back to smoking as not enough Doctors support Nicotine vaping as a form of harm reduction. Australia is the only country in the Commonwealth with these outrageous laws and instead choose to follow and abide by information provided by the United States where much of their information is completely false and misleading and contrary to what the UK and other Commonwealth countries are recommending.

Sincerely,

John Williamson

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Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

This submission is Public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this critical issue.

My name is Joshua Lincoln from Glen Osmond South Australia. I am 35 years old and I smoked for 15 years.

I tried to quit smoking 2 times, using:

- Cold Turkey
- Nicotine Patches
- Nicotine Gum

But vaping is the only method that worked for me. I have saved between \$5,001 - \$7,500 by switching to vaping.

I DO NOT support a prescription-only model to obtain liquid nicotine.

After going through a bad break up and ending up in a psych ward my smoking had increased to a horrific amount. There is a incredible number of smokers in these situations/circles with nothing else to do but convalesce and smoke. I was introduced to vaping by a fellow patient and while I found it very unsatisfactory at the beginning after a while I got used to it. Futher down the track it not only became a way for me to stop smoking and saving huge amounts of money but became a lifeline towards better mental health (as well as physical) as the community grew and I got deeply involved in all the science behind the devices, into making my own juices and building my own coils. I had something to focus on and was learning again for the first times in years, I was also socialising and connecting with new people though the community with common goals and interests. I can honestly and without hesitation say that vaping has not just saved my life but also my mind. I have been vaping for about 6-7 years now and dont know where Id be without it, if I would even still be alive.

Firstly I would be incredibly shocked and displeased. However due to my medical history I have Drs that would give me the scripts without too much hassle. However having to go through more Drs appointments and medical anything would without doubt affect my mental health. I expect Id probably avoid that and potentially take up smoking again, which I dont even want to think about where that might lead.

Sincerely,

Joshua Lincoln

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Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

This submission is Public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this critical issue.

My name is Peter Burtonclay from Brisbane Queensland. I am 48 years old and I smoked for 33 years.

I tried to quit smoking 15 times, using:

- Prescription Medicine (eg Champix)
- Cold Turkey
- Nicotine Patches
- Nicotine Gum
- Nicotine Sprays
- Nicotine Lozenges

But vaping is the only method that worked for me. I have saved between \$5,001 - \$7,500 by switching to vaping.

I DO NOT support a prescription-only model to obtain liquid nicotine.

I started smoking at a very young age and after 30+ years of smoking my health was deteriorating. I had respiratory issues with difficulty breathing when doing any physical activities. I tried many times to quit smoking but with limited success. Two years ago I decided to give vaping a go and was successful in finally quitting cigarettes. Within just a few weeks my health improved dramatically. My smokers cough went away and my skin colour became normal again. Even my dentist commented on my improved gum condition. I would really like Australia to use some common sense with regards to vaping and look at the model used in NZ and the UK. They have managed to reduce smoking rates and minimise youth uptake of vaping. I believe a prescription based model would be a backwards step. Just look at the CBD prescription based model as an example. Media reports indicate people who need CBD products find it easier to source on the black market. If ejuice availability takes this path it will become a black market product too and lives will be lost when unknowingly toxic substances are used in the manufacturing of street ejuice as happened in the USA. There is enough data available now to demonstrate the benefits of vaping and speaking from personal experience I cannot emphasise enough the improvement in my health since transitioning to vaping and I really dont want to have my accessibility taken away from me. If that happens I am very worried that I will end up smoking cigarettes again and no doubt become a burden on the health system as all smokers eventually do. Thank you for the opportunity to tell my story about vaping and how it has helped me.

Im scared if obtaining liquid nicotine is difficult I will start smoking again. Cigarettes and nicotine quit aids are available over the counter and liquid nicotine should be available this way too.

Sincerely,

Peter Burtonclay

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Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

This submission is Public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this critical issue.

My name is Phil Masters from Balgowlah New South Wales. I am 39 years old and I smoked for 20 years.

I tried to quit smoking 8 times, using:

- Cold Turkey
- Nicotine Patches
- Nicotine Gum
- Nicotine Sprays
- Nicotine Lozenges
- Hypnotherapy

But vaping is the only method that worked for me. I have saved between \$2,501 - \$5,000 by switching to vaping.

I DO NOT support a prescription-only model to obtain liquid nicotine.

Having smoked for 20 years, quitting was near impossible for me. I tried everything and had essentially given up trying, the stress of constant price increases of tobacco made it more depressing that I couldn't quit. After moving to New Zealand in 2018 I discovered vaping and bought a vaporizer on my 3rd day in the country, I didn't have a cigarette again for 6 months! down from 30 per day! I still have the occasional cigarette but now being back in Australia I'm deeply concerned that if nicotine becomes restricted myself and others may revert back to smoking, my health has improved immeasurably and I would never want to go back to smoking. Vaping with nicotine works incredibly well to help people quit and making it more difficult for people to get that substitute will ruin the progress and benefits we have achieved. When so many other nicotine substitutes are readily available without prescription, why target the single most effective option for restrictions?

Making nicotine vaping prescription only adds a barrier to entry and additional cost which will prevent many from trying it at all. Smokers are already trapped in a cycle experiencing physiological and psychological trauma when trying to give up, we should be encouraging vaping to these people and not making it more difficult than smoking in my opinion. Having been through the rollercoaster myself, this proposed legislation will be detrimental to the health progress of the community and social advantages of people migrating to vaping.

Sincerely,

Phil Masters

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# Submission to Tobacco Harm Reduction Committee

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Select Committee on Tobacco Harm Reduction  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

This submission is Public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this critical issue.

My name is Will Page from FRANKSTON Victoria. I am 40 years old and I smoked for 22 years.

I tried to quit smoking 6 times, using:

- Prescription Medicine (eg Champix)
- Cold Turkey
- Nicotine Patches
- Nicotine Gum
- Hypnotherapy

But vaping is the only method that worked for me. I have saved between \$10,001 - \$12,500 by switching to vaping.

I DO NOT support a prescription-only model to obtain liquid nicotine.

There is really no words to describe how passionate I am about vaping. I haven't smoked a cigarette for 3 years and have reduced my nicotine addiction and vape 3mg products. Nothing I tried worked previously and being able to save so much money, have clean smelling breath and nice teeth means so much to me now. Vaping is an absolute life changer.

A prescription only model would be a disaster. Most will revert back to smoking and we need some freedom to make great decisions and find the right products and juices to make us happy. I would do everything I can to stockpile as much juice as possible and eventually start smoking again. What I like now, is the variety and the range of products to find what works best for you. I have exactly the devices that I like and can vape juice for about \$10 per week. I can not foresee freedom in my choices nor can I foresee pricing that is as reasonable as it is now. Without regulation the vape industry has come such a long way with safety, reliability and options. The industry is nowadays extremely professional and is more than qualified to continue providing the affordable quality products to which we have become accustomed. Please, please listen to us. This is our lives we are talking about.

Sincerely,

Will Page

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Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee,

This submission is Public.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on this critical issue.

My name is Mark Riseley from Berridale Tasmania. I am 50 years old and I smoked for 24 years.

I tried to quit smoking 11 times, using:

- Prescription Medicine (eg Champix)
- Cold Turkey
- Nicotine Patches
- Nicotine Gum
- Nicotine Sprays
- Nicotine Lozenges
- Hypnotherapy

But vaping is the only method that worked for me. I have saved between \$2,501 - \$5,000 by switching to vaping.

I DO NOT support a prescription-only model to obtain liquid nicotine.

I first started smoking as a college student. Before then I was actually very anti cigarette smoking. I tried to make a girlfriend quit smoking but in the process tried a cigarette myself. Over time my smoking had increased to the point of being somewhat of a chain smoker. As a disability pensioner there was severe financial impact so I started using roll your own tobacco to save cost. I liked rolling them, I liked the activity in my hands. With my disability issues my doctors were always recommending that I quit and I was diagnosed eventually with COPD which was awful to deal with.. This along with the financial impact meant I tried many times to quit - way more times than the 11 times I can specifically remember. After each quit attempt there was a brief pause in smoking but I always returned to the cigarettes - stronger ones and in more quantity. With my partner also smoking the financial impact on the family was becoming terrible and impacting 4 young children. I had to find a new solution as other methods had failed me. This is when I went online looking for a solution and came across vaping. I was intrigued by the concept and research further. I had satisfied myself that relative likely harm was far better than continuing smoking the way I was. I started buying vape gear slowly as I could find money and began experimenting with what gear and liquid suited me best. I was still smoking but not as much. Then one day I noticed I was preferring the gear and liquid I had found to my smokes! It was also much more convenient. I have vaped ever since. The strength of my e-liquid has reduced from 18mg/ml to 8mg/ml over that time. I no longer need COPD medication and truly believe switching to vaping has saved my life.

I would find it difficult to deal with vaping as a prescription only product. I believe I would lose much of the appeal of vaping and be very tempted to the easier to get tobacco. In the interest of my own life I would have to try to engage black market supply even though I think black market supply would increase my risk of harm from vaping.

Sincerely,

Mark Riseley