



**Submission to the Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs’
inquiry into the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Bill 2023
and the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) (Consequential
Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2023**

By

Associate Professor Michelle I Jongenelis

Principal Research Fellow

Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences

The University of Melbourne

4th October 2023

About the submitter

I am a Principal Research Fellow within the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences at The University of Melbourne. I have expertise in health promotion, intervention development and evaluation, behavioural psychology, and clinical psychology. I work across multiple and diverse health-related behaviours including tobacco and alcohol control, nutrition, physical activity, and healthy ageing. I sit on the Australian Council of Smoking and Health and am a member of the World Federation for Public Health Associations' Tobacco Control Working Group.

Declarations

I have never received services, assistance, or support (whether monetary or non-monetary in nature) from the tobacco or e-cigarette industry.

I have never provided services, assistance, or support (whether monetary or non-monetary in nature) from the tobacco or e-cigarette industry.

Any opinions expressed are solely my own and do not represent the views or opinions of my employer.

I commend the Australian Government for producing a comprehensive piece of tobacco control legislation that is faithful to the evidence-based submissions made by the public health community. I strongly support the introduction of the legislation, which will strengthen Australia's approach to tobacco control and significantly improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of our community.

Over the last decade, Australia's tobacco control policy has fallen behind international best practice. Consequently, the prevalence of smoking in Australia is not falling as fast as it could. The Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Bill 2023 consolidates and simplifies eight different tobacco control laws and regulatory instruments. It will ensure Australia's tobacco control policy is fit for the 21st Century.

Failure to pass the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Bill 2023 will undoubtedly result in Australia failing to reach its target of reducing smoking prevalence to less than 5% by 2030 (as per the *National Preventive Health Strategy* and the *National Tobacco Strategy 2023-2030*). Given the Bill features the introduction of measures consistent with the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, failure to consider the Bill will also result in Australia being in breach of its obligations as a signatory to this treaty.

I urge the Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs to support the Bill to safeguard Australia's future and protect the health of Australians. Given the imminent sunset of current regulations covering tobacco product packaging, advertising, and promotion, it is critical that the Bill be *passed without delay*.