

9 August 2018



Dr Jennifer Buckley  
Secretary to the Economic Policy Scrutiny Committee  
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Dear Dr Buckley,

**RE: TOBACCO CONTROL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2018**

The Heart Foundation Northern Territory welcomes the opportunity to provide submission to the Economic Policy Scrutiny Committee.

The Heart Foundation through its One Heart Strategic Plan 2018-2020 has outlined a firm commitment to address the issue of tobacco use on the heart health of Australians with a specific focus on priority populations including, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people living in rural and remote Australia and people from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The Heart Foundation Northern Territory is optimistic that *Tobacco Control Legislation Amendment Bill 2018* signals a refocus of the Northern Territory Government to address the issues of tobacco that impact on the health and wellbeing all Territorians.

E-Cigarettes

The Heart Foundation Northern Territory fully supports the regulation of e-cigarettes and related accessories as if they were tobacco products. Regulating the sale, supply and use of e-cigarettes will ensure that:

- e-cigarettes are not used in places where smoking tobacco is prohibited;
- advertising of e-cigarettes is not permitted; and
- e-cigarettes will be subject to the same stringent point of sale restrictions as tobacco products.

Extension of an Entry and Boundary Area

Increasing smoke-free environments protects non-smokers from the harms of second hand smoke and also reinforces the de-normalisation of smoking. Increasing the entry and boundary of an event to 10m is a step in the right direction however, the Heart Foundation would like to see an increase in the number of smoke-free places and spaces across the Northern Territory, especially those areas which have high foot-traffic or areas regularly frequented by children.

The Heart Foundation Northern Territory fully supports mandatory signage however, it is essential that this signage is properly enforced by the appropriate authorities to ensure compliance. It is understood that the Northern Territory Government has very few compliance officers to monitor and enforce tobacco legislation. Without these resources, such measures are purely tokenistic.

#### Vending Machines

The Heart Foundation Northern Territory recommends the cessation of vending machine licenses in the Northern Territory. Tighter licensing measures must be considered as a valid method to curb the availability and supply of tobacco. The Heart Foundation would also like to see the Northern Territory Government consider stronger licensing measures included on tobacco licenses including:

- No new licenses to be granted to premises within 500 metres of a school, child care centre or health service.
- No new licenses to be granted if there is an existing retailer within 200 metres.

#### Child Employees Prohibited from Selling Tobacco

The Heart Foundation Northern Territory firmly believes that tobacco products should not be sold by children. Children should not be able to sell a product that they cannot legally purchase. It undermines our intention to reduce children's exposure to cigarettes and normalises smoking in their environment.

#### Smoke Free Entry and Boundary at Educational Facilities

The Heart Foundation Northern Territory supports the boundary of an educational facility being smoke-free. However, maintaining the right to create a designated smoking area within an education facility is a backward step. The Northern Territory Government's position on smoking in educational facilities is outdated especially given that teachers play an important role in modeling appropriate health behaviours to children. The Northern Territory is the only jurisdiction in Australia permits smoking on educational facilities. Given the Northern Territory currently has the highest prevalence of smoking, it is time the Northern Territory Government became leaders in tobacco control by building greater public awareness of smoke-free environments to further reinforce the de-normalisation of smoking.

We look forward to working with you to continue to improve the Heart Health of all Territorians.

Sincerely,



Dr Marcus Ilton  
Chair, Local Advisory Board  
Heart Foundation Northern Territory



Simon Dixon  
CEO  
Heart Foundation Northern Territory