

## **TOBACCO PRODUCTS REGULATION (MISCELLANEOUS)**

### **AMENDMENT BILL**

**23 October 2007**

**The Hon. A.L. EVANS:** I rise to support the second reading of this bill. The bill makes miscellaneous amendments to the Tobacco Products Regulation Act to clear up a loophole where a commonwealth situation has over-ruled state law, as well as regulate the placement of cigarette vending machines. We are asked to ensure that minors are not sneaking into pokie venues and using the machines without supervision. The bill also asks the parliament to rule out the earning of rewards by buying cigarettes at, say, a Coles or Woolworths store to get a discount on petrol.

I will not go into the third issue of closing the loophole regarding health advisory warnings on cigarette packets, but it is an interesting example of further encroachment by the commonwealth over state rights. Having said that, I think that, if the states are inactive or tardy on this issue, perhaps the commonwealth government's actions are justified, as we have seen, for instance, with television advertising being used to convince people not to try, or to give up on using, other drugs, such as ice.

I appreciate that, from time to time, ministers, in their portfolios, need to put bills before us more or less for housekeeping purposes, as it seems to be in the case of this bill. Sitting back after looking at this bill, I could not help but think, 'Is this the best we can do?' Family First has a bill on foot to ban smoking in outdoor eating areas. Surely, banning smoking in public places, where people work and are trying to enjoy a meal, is a stronger reform. Surely, copying Queensland's fine agenda, which I understand includes one of this bill's reforms, would be commendable. We have to get serious about dealing with a smoking habit that puts a huge burden on our public health system.

In speaking on my bill, the Hon. Dennis Hood mentioned Western Australian research that shows that in 2004 smoking cost \$1.6 billion, which equates to one half of the cost of running the health system in that state, and

that is a staggering situation. I do not think the overwhelming majority of people who do not smoke would tolerate a government allowing that minority of people to put such a heavy burden on the health system and, ultimately, on public revenue. Family First supports this bill, but we will be looking to the government for tougher reforms to deter smoking and to help people to kick the habit.