



Australian Retail  
**Vaping Industry**  
Association

Member Group of the Australian Retailers Association



Meeting No 74  
5 May 2020, 5:30PM  
Future Melbourne Committee  
Council Meeting Room, Level 2, Town Hall Administration Building

Monday, 4 May 2020

Dear Councillors,

**RE: RETAILERS OPPOSE CBD VAPING BAN – AGENDA ITEM 6.4**

The Australian Retail Vaping Industry Association (ARVIA) is a Member Group of the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) and represents specialist vape stores as well as ordinary retailers that want to see lifesaving smoke free products legalised in Australia.

ARVIA and the ARA strongly object to the proposed amendment to the *Activities Local Law 2019* to extend existing smoking bans in the Melbourne Central Business District (CBD) to include vaping and e-cigarettes.

The international peer reviewed scientific evidence is conclusive that vaping is not only 95% safer than traditional cigarettes for vapers, but that there is no health risk to bystanders posed by vape devices or electronic cigarette vapour.

While Australia remains the only Western Democracy to ban vaping, in every other civilised nation in the world, vaping is helping record numbers of smokers to quit smoking and is transforming and improving lives. Not only is vaping driving down smoking rates, but nations where vaping is legal, such as the US and the UK, are witnessing dramatic falls in youth smoking without any concomitant increase in youth vaping.

Given that vaping is the most popular and effective quit smoking tool now available, likening it to smoking, and falsely claiming that vaping will somehow lead to smoking or poses a health risk to bystanders is false, disingenuous and is not based on any evidence available from anywhere in the world.

In recent months both the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) have updated their policy in relation to smoking cessation and now endorse vaping as a proven method to help smokers quit. The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists also recognise that vaping is safer than smoking.

In addition to these three major Australian medical colleges, internationally there are numerous highly regarded organisations that recognise that vaping is safer than smoking and is a proven and effective quit smoking tool. These include:

- The New Zealand Health Promotion Agency
- The New Zealand Medical Association
- Hāpai Te Haora (Maori Public Health)
- The New Zealand College of General Practitioners
- Heart Foundation New Zealand
- Cancer Society New Zealand
- Quitline NZ
- Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand
- Public Health England
- The British National Health Service
- Royal College of General Practitioners
- Royal College of Physicians
- Royal College of Psychiatrists
- The Royal College of Midwives
- Royal College of Nursing
- Cancer Research UK
- The British Medical Association
- The British Lung Foundation
- The British Heart Foundation
- The US National Academies of Sciences Engineering Medicine (NASEM)

Notwithstanding the plethora of major well-respected national and international organisations that endorse vaping, opposition to vaping by so-called public health groups in Australia such as *Quit Victoria* is based purely on self-interest, emotion and ideology, rather than science. This is resulting in 21,000 Australians dying from a painful, traumatic and entirely avoidable smoking related death every year.

Banning and restricting access to vaping simply protects traditional cigarettes and only serves the interests of Big Tobacco. We therefore urge Councillors to vote against this proposal so as to not further entrench the place of combustible tobacco in our community, and to work with Australian retailers to embrace scientifically proven safer smoke free alternatives.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,



**Brett Chant**

Advocacy Manager

Australian Retailers Association & Australian Retail Vaping Industry Association

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