




Speech by

Jann Stuckey

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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HEALTH AND HOSPITALS NETWORK BILL

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (4.00 pm), continuing: Improving health services and increasing hospital bed numbers are amongst the top concerns for some 3,000 residents who responded to my electorate-wide survey last November. It is obvious that the previous cross-border MOU signed by former Labor Premiers Peter Beattie and Morris Iemma in 2007 did nothing to deliver improvements to health services. It proved to be little more than a photo opportunity, but then Beattie was good at that: all spin and grin and no substance. It is hoped that the new MOU, signed by the Queensland and New South Wales premiers last month, will be a catalyst for not only improved health services but also better delivery of a range of other basic services across our border.

Amendments are also proposed to the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 proposing a complete ban on the retail display of smoking products, giving effect to a 2010 recommendation of the Social Development Committee to ban smoking product displays in retail settings. These changes will be achieved by removing the current provisions in the act that allow a limited display of tobacco in shops. Consequential amendments are also proposed to the location of smoking products, the point of sale for smoking products, signage, appearance and price tickets. It is anticipated that a complete retail display ban in Queensland will help to further reduce youth exposure to tobacco and create a supportive environment for smokers who have recently quit or want to do so.

While these are commendable intentions and a move in the right direction to discourage people from smoking, it is also typical behaviour of this Labor government to rush through policies without consideration of the financial and logistical implications it will have for the retail and small business sector. As I have said many times before in this place, this Bligh Labor government has complete disregard for small businesses as it slugs them with tax after tax and cost after cost. These stakeholders have not been considered in any way in the formation of this policy, which has been thrust upon the industry at very short notice. Furthermore, as it stands, businesses cannot act until the law is passed and the details of the regulations are known. A number of concerned stakeholders have made representations to me in my capacity as shadow minister for small business and informed me of the very real cost associated with the implementation of these stringent reforms.

Tobacco display bans will impact over 6,000 Queensland retailers from hypermarkets, Coles and Woolworths to IGAs and Foodworks, free-choice tobacconists, service stations, 7-Elevens and NightOwls to general traders such as corner stores and milk bars. A comment from Philip Morris Ltd states—

Allowing business and retailers adequate time to make necessary changes will help ensure smooth implementation. Business requires enough time following the passing of the Act and the release of regulations to plan, manufacture and install new hardware solutions to comply with display bans. Retailers also need to know what provisions are in place for operational aspects such as price ticketing and price boards before they can make changes.

I wonder whether the minister would in his reply let us know whether shop owners will be offered any compensation for the cost of planning, manufacturing and installing new retail displays to comply with this law.

Provisions proposed in this legislation relating to the point of sale are particularly onerous around restricting the vision of tobacco products from customers and will require significant changes to many current shop fitouts. This government is forcing yet another cost onto the already struggling retail sector without providing adequate time frames and support. That is why the LNP will be moving an amendment to extend the time frame to allow retailers more time to implement these alterations. Surely this is a reasonable modification for the government to include.