

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is . I am 40 years of age and currently residing in Western Australia. I have been married for 10 years and have two beautiful children aged 5 and 3. I have been smoking cigarettes on and off since the age of 16. I have tried countless times to quit via different techniques, however, have always returned to smoking cigarettes. From the age of 6 I was diagnosed with severe asthma, which was always exacerbated by smoking. Not only were the cigarettes bad for me but the secondary effect was that I was never able to maintain a physical exercise due to the inability to breathe.

I have been using nicotine replacement therapy for the last 5 years, in the form of e-cigarettes, also known as vaping.

Using vaping I have not needed or craved a cigarette. In fact, the sheer thought of cigarettes, or the smell of cigarettes make me feel sick. I have found the perfect strength of nicotine liquid that satisfies my cravings, all the while being a 95% safer alternative to the traditional combustion cigarettes. This means I will be around longer to see my children grown up – the catalyst for seeking an alternative to smoking cigarettes.

Since I have started vaping, I have taken up physical exercise, running and weightlifting which has resulted in me being in the best shape of my life. I have gone from an overweight 20-year-old asthmatic smoker, to a lean 40-year-old vaper with no noticeable asthmatic symptoms.

Other noticeable difference are that I have had my sense of smell and taste return, I no longer stink of cigarette smoke and the greatest of all is that I will be alive a lot longer to spend time with my children, due to vaping being 95% safer than smoking.

My story is not unique. I know many countless others who have found this life saving technology and have used vaping to ensure they are able to quit smoking cigarettes, all by use of flavoured nicotine liquid. Most of us have tried other alternatives throughout the years but nothing has been as successful as keeping people off cigarettes as vaping has been.

Most of the vaping industry has had to self-regulate and would like to see the government outline some basic standards, specifically around allowing nicotine liquid to be legalised for use and sale within Australia. We have introduced the use of childproof caps on e-liquid (even at 0% nicotine) as well as proof of age, and age restrictions for purchasing vaping products in brick and mortar vape shops. There is also the including of age verification for online purchases made within Australia.

The current system allows individuals to import base nicotine to be added to their flavoured liquid, to their desired nicotine strength. Although this situation works, it is certainly not flawed. There are issues with storing and decanting of this liquid, and if not done correctly, with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment, could result in harm to the individual. The other, and most common alternative is the purchase and import e-liquid containing nicotine from international websites, most notably New Zealand and United States of America. This does result in money not being put back into Australian Economy.

However, the proposed use of prescription for nicotine liquid will not work. This will put a massive strain on both the doctors and pharmacies. This also limits the end user to only purchase nicotine from pharmacies, of which there is no visibility on the quality of nicotine being purchased or used. Not too mention that cigarettes, nicotine patches, gum and sprays are also sold at Pharmacies without the requirement of such prescription. Not to mention the sale of cigarettes are commonplace amongst Service Stations, Supermarkets, Corner Stores and Speciality

Shops/Tobacconists. Due in part to each state having differing laws, in the state I live in, it is perfectly legal to purchase cigarettes online, through large supermarket chains, and have these delivered to my door.

The legalisation of nicotine liquid would not only provide jobs and income for the country, but the sale and legalisation of nicotine e-liquid would also allow smokers to convert from smoking cigarettes to vaping, with a lot more ease and without the worry of having to purchase, store and decant nicotine into their flavoured e-liquid bottles.

I implore the government to take influence and look deeply into the research of countries that have embraced vaping as a life saving technology. I strongly believe the embracing vaping and new technology combined with the legalisation and sale of nicotine liquid in Australia the smoking rates will severely drop.

Thank you.