

## Jodi McKay

Minister for Tourism  
Minister for the Hunter  
Minister for Small Business  
Minister for Science and Medical Research  
Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)



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## REES GOVERNMENT PROTECTS CHILDREN FROM EXPOSURE TO SMOKING IN CARS

The Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer) Jodi McKay said the passing of new anti-smoking laws by Parliament today has made NSW a world leader in tobacco reform.

“The Public Health (Tobacco) Bill specifically protects children from exposure to second hand tobacco smoke and delivers new measures to prevent young people from taking up smoking,” Ms McKay said.

The groundbreaking laws will:

- make it an offence to smoke in a motor vehicle if a child under 16 years is in the car;
- ban the display of cigarettes in retail outlets;
- permit only one cigarette vending machine on any premises; and
- ban tobacco companies from sponsoring sporting and racing events.

“If cigarettes are out of sight, hopefully they’ll be out of mind, protecting children’s health and supporting smokers trying to quit the habit,” Ms McKay said.

“Smoking is one of the country’s biggest killers, and the Rees Government is totally committed to helping the next generation avoid a lifetime habit that causes illness and premature death.

“No child should have to seek medical care because of exposure to other people’s smoke.

“Children’s exposure to other people’s smoke is involuntary, and children are particularly susceptible to health damage caused by inhaling second hand tobacco smoke.

“In fact, 90 per cent of health care costs for hospitalising people for second hand tobacco smoke relate to children’s exposure to other people’s smoke,” Ms McKay said.

“The Rees Government refuses to stand by and let this dreadful situation continue and has taken action to protect children.

“Our Government has already phased out smoking in pubs and clubs, and has banned tobacco marketing gimmicks used to appeal to young people – like fruit-flavoured cigarettes and smoking tents at music festivals.

“These pioneering laws will now make NSW the Australian leader in tobacco control measures in the retail setting,” Ms McKay said.

Ms McKay said the Public Health (Tobacco) Bill 2008 measures will:

- prohibit the display of tobacco products, non-tobacco products and smoking accessories in shops;
- require tobacco products and non-tobacco smoking products to be sold from only one point of sale on premises;
- limit the number of tobacco vending machines permitted on premises to one vending machine and making vending machines subject to display bans;
- make it an offence to smoke in a motor vehicle while a child under the age of 16 years is present. The changes will also make the driver liable if a passenger smokes in those circumstances.

“The Rees Government refuses to ignore the facts about the impact of smoking on our community,” Ms McKay said.

“We know one in two lifetime smokers will die from their habit. We know a third of those deaths will occur in middle age, at the prime of people's lives.

“We also know the overwhelming majority of smokers start smoking before the age of 20 – it is these people we want to stop smoking in the first place,” Ms McKay said.

“While we have made significant progress over the past decade - with the percentage of people who smoke daily or occasionally dropping from 24 to 18.6 per cent, there's no room for complacency when we consider the health of children and young people.

Ms McKay said the NSW Government spends more than \$250 million a year treating tobacco-related illness, with the indirect cost to the NSW community conservatively estimated at more than \$6.6 billion every year.

“\$250 million is equivalent to employing 3000 full-time nurses,” Ms McKay said.

“These new anti-smoking laws are further decisive action in our fight to help our young people make better choices about their health,” Ms McKay said.

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