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## **Tough New Anti-Smoking Laws for Tasmania**

The Minister for Health, Michelle O'Byrne, said Tasmania was once again leading the nation in the fight against smoking.

Ms O'Byrne said the passage of tough new anti-tobacco legislation through the Upper House today was a significant event in the effort to drive down smoking rates in Tasmania.

“These laws will see an end to smoking in outdoor dining areas and the creation of smoke-free areas at playgrounds, sporting venues and bus shelters,” she said.

“Our aim is to de-normalise smoking to try and stop the next generations of Tasmanian children from ever picking up a cigarette at all.

“We want to help parents protect their children from cigarette smoke. We want our kids to live in a place where the sight of an adult smoking near them is something abnormal, rather than just another common sight.”

Ms O'Byrne said today was a landmark day for the fight against tobacco for Australia, with the Senate expected to pass the Gillard Government's cigarette plain packaging legislation this evening.

“Our legislation compliments the Federal laws; together we will have a real impact on smoking rates.

“We must act. Too many Tasmanians smoke – almost 16 per cent are daily smokers – and too many people are forced to breathe in second hand smoke.

“The cost to individuals is huge. Smoking kills and so tears families apart.

“But there is also an enormous economic cost to Tasmania as a whole. Smoking costs the Tasmanian economy \$900 million a year.”

Ms O'Byrne said considering the health and economic impacts of smoking, the Tasmanian Government made no apology for getting even tougher on smoking.

The new laws, which will commence on 1 March 2012, will include the introduction of:

- Smoke free areas in all outdoor dining areas, pedestrian and bus malls, within 10 metres of play equipment at public playgrounds, between the flags at patrolled beaches, within 20 metres of competition and seating areas of all sporting venues during competition.
- The extension of restrictions on the sale and display of tobacco products, including at specialist tobacconists and the removal of cigarettes from shopper loyalty programs.

Further information on the Public Health Amendment Bill 2011 can be found at [http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/bills/Bills2011/pdf/notes/56\\_of\\_2011-Fact%20Sheet.pdf](http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/bills/Bills2011/pdf/notes/56_of_2011-Fact%20Sheet.pdf).