



## **HUGH DELAHUNTY, MP MEMBER FOR LOWAN**

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

---

5 December 2007

#### **NATIONALS RECEIVE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR 'SMOKING IN CARS' BAN**

The Nationals Member for Lowan and spokesperson on Health and Children Hugh Delahunty says he and his colleagues had been overwhelmed by the level of support for a ban on cigarette smoking in cars when children are present.

"The Nationals yesterday gave notice in State Parliament that they intend to introduce a Private Members Bill to ban smoking in a vehicle where a child is present and make it illegal for children under 18 to purchase and possess tobacco products," Mr Delahunty said.

"Banning smoking in cars when children are present will send a clear message to the community that the Nationals are serious about protecting the health of young people," Mr Delahunty said.

"In a perfect world, everyone would have the common sense to not smoke in a car with children but we must take action to protect the health of young people. There are a range of serious ailments which can affect children when they are exposed to second hand smoke, and the long-term links between smoking and fatal diseases are well documented."

"Such bans are already in place in South Australia and they will come into effect in Tasmania on January 1, 2008. New South Wales and Queensland are also heading in the same direction and the WA State Government is undertaking a major education program," Mr Delahunty said.

Mr Delahunty said the push towards banning underage smoking was also intended to send a consistent message to young people about the dangers of tobacco products.

"The rate of cigarette smoking among adults has virtually halved in the past 20 years but for Victorian children aged 16-17, the figure is not dropping fast enough," Mr Delahunty said.

"Our children and young people are our investment in the future and we owe it to them to do everything we can to stop them from taking up the smoking habit. The Brumby Government has placed bans on smoking in school grounds and at State Government sponsored underage music events, but the moment that our children leave those venues, we're saying it's OK to light up - we need to stop sending mixed messages to young people," Mr Delahunty said.

\* \* \* END \* \* \*

**MEDIA CONTACT: HUGH DELAHUNTY, MP 5382 0097 OR 5571 9800**