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The Committee Secretariat
PO Box 6021 Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

To whom it may concern

We are New Zealand health researchers with a special interest in tobacco control and smoking cessation. We have been following the different worldwide approaches to electronic cigarette ('e-cigarettes') policy with great interest.

In New Zealand, we have seen a recent shift in thinking among our tobacco control community, healthcare professionals and our policy advisors and politicians, towards support of wider access to e-cigarettes and nicotine containing e-liquid.

The New Zealand government has recently signalled it will be adopting a pragmatic policy approach that will allow adults greater access to nicotine-containing e-liquid.

This decision has come about due to mounting evidence, at both an individual and population level, that e-cigarette use can support people to quit smoking tobacco and help people reduce the amount of tobacco they smoke. Furthermore, there is low risk of exposure to harmful toxicants when using e-cigarettes, compared to a high risk when smoking tobacco. There is also limited evidence of any potential for population harms (such as the purported gateway theory, and re-normalisation hypothesis) associated with e-cigarette use, whereas there is a large body of research showing that tobacco use causes significant population harm.

We have undertaken foundational research on e-cigarettes over the past decade. Our research has not been supported by the tobacco industry. Our e-cigarette studies have been funded by public good sources. We have no stake in any commercial interests in these products.

Our research has shown that:

1. These devices are at least as effective as nicotine patches at helping smokers quit.^{1, 2}
2. The aerosol from e-cigarettes is far less toxic than tobacco smoke.³

As a result of our research on e-cigarettes, and our familiarity with the growing body of research on all aspects of these products, we strongly support policies that support smokers to switch from tobacco smoking to far less harmful forms of nicotine delivery (such as e-cigarettes).

We consider that when e-cigarettes are appropriately regulated to ensure standards of quality and safety are met (as for other consumer products), they have considerable potential to reduce the health harms from smoking tobacco.

We hope that policy makers considering the place of e-cigarettes in Australia will keep the health of smokers at the forefront of their decision-making, and ahead of any theoretical harms.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you would require further information.



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¹ Bullen, C., et al. (2013). "Electronic cigarettes for smoking cessation: a randomised controlled trial." *Lancet* 382.

² Hajek, P., et al. (2016). "E-cigarettes and smoking cessation." *The Lancet Respiratory Medicine* 25: 25.

³ Chen, J., et al. (2017). "A Comparative Health Risk Assessment of Electronic Cigarettes and Conventional Cigarettes." *Int J Environ Res Public Health* 14(4): 382.