



Sent 1 November 2023 online

The Hon. Ryan Park MP

NSW Minister for Health

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Taking the profit out of illegal importation and distribution of vapes is important

WCTU Australia (WCTU) notes with interest that the NSW government has allocated \$6.8m to combat illegal vape sales and youth addiction and thanks you for this most welcomed initiative.

In May 2023, WCTU Australia noted the announcement of reforms that will ban the import of nicotine and non-nicotine vapes and vape products, with only licensed pharmacists permitted to import and sell them.

The Hon. Mark Butler MP, Federal Health Minister said in a recent radio interview that “ground policing at a state and territory level is crucial to make sure that these things aren't still coming through in very small packages and being sold in convenience stores or even worse, these vape stores that are often open just down the road from schools.”

[\[https://www.markbutler.net.au/news/transcripts/radio-interview-abc-rn-breakfast-monday-14-august-2023/\]](https://www.markbutler.net.au/news/transcripts/radio-interview-abc-rn-breakfast-monday-14-august-2023/)

WCTU urges you to take the profit out of illegal importation of vapes. It is acknowledged that a ban may stimulate the black market, and therefore the penalty should be high enough to act as a deterrent: imprisonment plus a heavy fine. For example, \$10 million plus 10 years' jail for importing any commercial non-prescription quantity would make those who distribute vapes financially responsible for all the adverse effects that vaping has on users during their lifetime. In NSW, a \$1m penalty plus 7 years jail for dumping chemicals into Sydney creeks was very effective: it stopped overnight.

We would appreciate to be kept informed of any NSW initiative concerning taking the profit out of the illegal distribution of vapes.