**Public Health Amendment (Prevention of Sale of Smoking Products to under-age Persons) Bill 2019**

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of Tasmanian Independent Retailers to talk about legislation currently before Tasmania’s Legislative Council.

The *Public Health Amendment (Prevention of Sale of Smoking Products to under-age Persons) Bill 2019* was tabled by the Hon Ivan Dean MLC in 2018 and proposes to make several changes in relation to smoking laws in Tasmania in relation to under-aged persons.

These changes include (but are not limited to):

* Increasing the legal smoking age from 18 to 21 years of age by staggering the change over a three-year period;
* Make it an offence for an under-age person (person between the age of 18 and 21) to provide false proof of age when purchasing smoking products;
* Requiring the Director of Public Health to review the legislation three years after it comes into effect.

In addition to the above changes, we are reliably informed that there are moves to take this bill one step further by banning under-aged persons from selling tobacco products at all. This is of extreme concern to us, as it will have significant implications for the viability of small and medium businesses in Tasmania, and place further and unnecessary restrictions on the ability of young people to find employment, particularly in smaller communities.

We will be making representations to Government, Opposition and Independent MP’s and express our opposition to any moves to implement these restrictions. In the meantime, I ask you to also contact your local MP and let them know the impact these changes would have.

I will keep you informed as this issue progresses, please contact me if you would like to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,

**Grant Hinchcliffe**

**Chief Executive Officer**

**Tasmanian Independent Retailers**