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Public backs push for tighter smoking bans

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Most West Australians favour smoking bans in cars carrying children and at outdoor venues such as parks and beaches, according to two new surveys that will be used to lobby State MPs.

The results, which show support for anti-tobacco measures even from smokers, are contained in submissions to a Lower House inquiry starting today into Alfred Cove MP Janet Woollard's proposed smoking bans.

Dr Woollard has in-principle support for the Bill from the Labor Party and Nationals leader Brendon Grylls, but has drawn opposition from some hospitality industry groups and Police Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan.

A recent Cancer Council survey of more than 400 people has found strong public backing for the anti-smoking measures, with 85 per cent of non-smokers and 39 per cent of

smokers favouring alfresco bans while 81 per cent of non-smokers and 33 per cent of smokers back bans at parks and beaches.

Tobacco programs director Denise Sullivan said the council rejected claims the bans would be too difficult to police, saying experience from other jurisdictions showed they were largely self-enforcing.

"Our results show even though smokers won't necessarily welcome the changes, they see them as inevitable and they want clarity of where they can smoke so they're not in conflict with non-smokers," she said.

"By having uniformity across the State it makes it clear where and when people can smoke, and that would be warmly welcomed by the vast majority of West Australians."

A survey by health insurer HBF has also found strong support for a tougher stance, with 87 per cent of members wanting a smoking ban in cars carrying children.