Sir, – Our members have worked tirelessly to enforce the ban on smoking in workplaces in the 12 years since its introduction with almost universal success. A recent study by the Tobacco Free Research Institute Ireland found that an estimated 3,700 smoking-related deaths have been spared because people are less exposed to second-hand smoke. Finian McGrath refers to smokers as “soft targets”. May I remind the Minister of State for Health that the legislation was not designed to act against smokers but rather to protect the health of those who through no fault of their own are exposed to second hand smoke. May I also suggest that it would be in everyone’s interest if Mr McGrath were to support the strategies outlined in the Tobacco-Free Ireland plan, including supporting, encouraging and motivating smokers who wish to quit. – Yours, etc,

PETER GAFFEY,

Chairman,

Environmental Health

Association of Ireland,

Bray,

Co Wicklow.