

SB 3: Electronic Smoking Devices, Other Tobacco Products, and Cigarettes – Taxation and Regulation.
(Sen McCray). Budget and Taxation Committee January 29, 2020

SUPPORT

MDDCSAM is the Maryland state chapter of the American Society of Addiction Medicine whose members are physicians and other health providers who treat people with substance use disorders.

Each of the components of SB 3 will advance public health and prevent disease in a significant proportion of Marylanders.

Increased tobacco taxes lead to a predictable decrease in tobacco use. The price elasticity of tobacco demand in the U.S. has been measured at -0.37, according to the World Health Organization. It is possible to predict that, for an overall price increase of 20%, for example, tobacco use would decrease by $0.37 \times 20\%$, a 7.4% drop in consumption in this example.

Health care providers counsel and assist tobacco users in quitting. Even though short-term quit rates are low, this is still considered to be the most cost-effective intervention in medicine with the exception of vaccinations, because tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. Tax increases will be even more effective at preventing the most common causes of death and disease in the U.S. including cerebrovascular disease, lung disease, cancer, and many others.

About 90% of cigarette users have tobacco use disorder; they would want to quit if there were an easy way to do so, sometimes with ambivalence, but feel they are unable.

E-cigarettes have been promoted as an aid to smoking cessation. It is possible that this has helped some individuals to quit tobacco.

However, it has become abundantly clear that these products have resulted in a rapidly growing epidemic of addiction among people who never used tobacco, particularly young people. Also, there are seven FDA-approved medications to treat nicotine addiction including nicotine replacement therapies (gum, patch, lozenge, inhaler and nasal spray), and two non-nicotine therapies.

Now that the harms of E-cigarettes have become obvious, the need to reduce the fast-moving epidemic of nicotine addiction through E-cigarettes has become urgent.
