

CIGAR ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.

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Senate Finance Committee

Bill number: SB233

Position: Opposed

Dear Chair Kelley and the Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

The Cigar Association of America (CAA) is the premier voice of the cigar industry in the United States. CAA is troubled by efforts to remove flavored cigars from the market and as such we oppose sb233. CAA believes there are not scientific or legal justification for such actions. Importantly, there is no scientific data or research to support restricting flavors in cigars in Maryland. Youth usage of cigars in Maryland has been on a continual year-over-year downward trend.

- The 2016 Maryland YRBS/YTS data reported that in 2016 only 9.0% of Maryland high school students smoked a cigar in the past 30 days a decrease from a 12.5% in 2013.
- Use of flavored tobacco products (excluding menthol cigarettes) by Maryland high school students declined from 13.3% in 2013 to 7.4% in 2016.
- In contrast in 2016, 13.3% of Maryland high school students used an electronic vapor product in the past 30 days

Even outside of the data in Maryland, unlike the recently released data on e-cigarettes, there has not been an increase in youth usage of cigars, or flavored cigars, in particular, that supports a change in law:

- The 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) reported that only 1.8% of youth were current cigar smokers, decreasing from 4.1% in 2006
- The 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBS) reported 8.0% of youth ever smoked a cigar, a decline from 13.6% in 2007
- The 2018 National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS) reports a significant decline from 2011-2018 in high school usage of cigars from 11.6% to 7.6%, and the 2019 NYTS reports the same 7.6% of high school students using cigars
- The 2019 Monitoring the Future Survey (MTF) reports a decline in past thirty day use for 8th and 10th graders for all types of cigars, and a decline in flavored little cigar and regular little cigar usage in 12th graders. Flavored little cigar use has continued on a steady decline since 2014 when this result began to be tracked

We urge an unfavorable report.