

Testimony
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H. B. 1011: 2021 Maryland Local Tobacco Control Bill
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As the NAACP Baltimore County Branch President and Maryland NAACP Health Chairperson, I join the coalition partners in supporting the H. B. 1011: Maryland Local Tobacco Control Bill on promoting health awareness, decreasing tobacco use, reducing the effects of second hand smoking and reducing tobacco use as it relates to the effects tobacco has on the body.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) uses the National Adult Tobacco (NAT) Survey when estimating the adult smoking rates. It is estimated that approximately 21.3% of adults use tobacco every day to every other day. Most cigar packs are package as 5 to 10 cigars. If we calculate a teen or adult using tobacco at the lower number at 5 cigars for 7 days a week, the person would have smoked 1,825 cigars/year. If the individuals use 10 cigars for 7 days a week, the person would have smoked 3,650 cigars/year. Imagine the effects the smoke has on the internal organs, the lungs, teeth, gums, heart, throat, and circulatory system, etc. Tobacco products causes cancer in various organs, emphysema, bronchitis, and may cause erectile dysfunction. According to the CDC more than 16 million Americans live with a disease caused by smoking. The use of tobacco products also has effects on air quality which effects our future generations. It effects the unborn babies/fetus who did not ask to come into the world who is diagnosed with a birth defect from the effects of the smoking from the mother or the second-hand smoking in the household.

To stop the usage of tobacco products early would be a huge savings for the health insurance industry. Health People 2020 uses tobacco as a leading indicator to measure health and many insurance agency has started to charge more if the individual smokes or use tobacco products because they know it is a health risk. Smoking/tobacco products is a leading cause for “preventable morbidity and mortality”

(CDC). Use of tobacco products cause greater than 480,000 deaths/year and 41,000 deaths from second-hand smoke; this estimates to 1,300 deaths every day. Stopping the use of tobacco products early can reduce the long-term effects and save lives.

The Who Health Organization (WHO) published that premature heart disease, stroke and diabetes can be prevented as a result of stopping second hand smoking. Smoking is higher with men, young adults, certain people living in certain geographical areas, less educated individuals, low income, and LGBT individuals (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender).

I support and recommend that the General Assembly passing the H. B. 1011: 2021 Maryland Local Tobacco Control Bill to provide local Marylanders the authority to regulate their own laws on tobacco products based on the assessment of their community.