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Joint Committee on Administrative,
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Testimony of Delegate Samuel I. Rosenberg
Before the House Economic Matters Committee
In Support Of

House Bill 1011
Cigarettes, Other Tobacco Products, and Electronic Smoking Devices - Local Law
Authorization

Mister Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Every jurisdiction has varying demographics with unique challenges. We should allow those who are the most informed about their constituents to make decisions regarding laws that affect them. Local laws are targeted and focused on the most pressing needs of the people.

The General Assembly has a responsibility to act to preserve public health and safety and must do so now. Specifically with regards to tobacco and smoking. "Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, and nearly all tobacco use being during youth and young adulthood", a report from the CDC explained.¹

We witnessed the federal government take unprecedented and swift action to raise the minimum age to purchase tobacco to 21 in 2019. While a necessary and exemplary measure, we can and must do more to ensure we mitigate the ongoing rise in tobacco use, specifically among young people.

House Bill 1011 would authorize a county or municipality to enact and enforce local laws, that are at least as stringent as state laws, regarding the regulation of the sale and distribution of cigarettes, other tobacco products, and electronic smoking devices. HB1011 explicitly does not give local jurisdictions authority over the issuance of licenses or imposition of taxes regarding tobacco products and electronic smoking devices.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Tobacco Product Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2011–2017." June 8, 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6722a3.htm>

This legislation strikes an appropriate regulatory balance. I urge the Committee to act favorably on House Bill 1011.

February 24, 2021