

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**SENATE BILL 582
BUSINESS REGULATION-CIGARETTE, OTHER TOBACCO
PRODUCT, AND ELECTRIC SMOKING DEVICE RETAILERS –
NICOTINE REPLACEMENT PRODUCTS
(MAKE QUITTING CONVENIENT ACT)**

DANIEL WHITT, CHIEF OF

RESPIRATORY THERAPY AT VA

MARYLAND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

POSITION: FAVORABLE

February 22, 2024

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of this Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 582.

I personally support SB 582. As the Chief of Respiratory Therapy at VA Maryland Health Care System, I see the health toll that smoking takes on the veterans under our care. Putting smoking cessation products in the stores where an overwhelming majority of cigarettes are sold can only help on a person's quitting journey.

Studies by the American Cancer Society and the Truth Initiative show using Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) can nearly double the chances of quitting smoking and increases quit rates from 50% to 70%.

According to the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco, almost half (45.8%) of quitting attempts are spontaneous, meaning that a smoker tries to quit as soon as they make the decision to do so. Selling NRTs at convenience stores alongside cigarettes supports this spontaneous decision to quit, treat acute nicotine cravings, and prevent cigarette usage relapse.

I feel that when one more veteran quits smoking in our state, we all win!

For these reasons, I urge you to support Senate Bill 582.

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