



# **MDGASP**



**Maryland Group Against Smoker's Pollution**  
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## **Testimony in support of Senate Tax Bill Senate Bill 3**

by

**John O' Hara: Ph. D**  
**President: Maryland Group Against Smoker's Pollution**

**January 29, 2020**

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Honorable Committee members,

My name is John O' Hara. I am the President of the Maryland Group Against Smoker's Pollution (MDGASP), an organization with over 1,000 members across the state. We have members from every district in the state.

I am 86 years old and over the last four decades I have testified before committees of the Maryland General Assembly every single year pertaining to tobacco and/or vaping control. Over these many years the State of Maryland has passed several bills to protect the health of its citizens from the ravages of tobacco smoke. I commend the General Assembly for these efforts, however, we still have a long way to go.

The tobacco and vaping industry is still out there hooking our children on their products every day. Over 25% of our high school students and even 10% of our eighth graders are hooked on vaping. The facts are clear that vaping is harmful and extremely addictive. Many adults and young people are dying from smoking and vaping.

One way to counter their efforts is to raise the taxes on their products. Raising the taxes is a win-win in that it reduces the use of tobacco/vape products by our kids as well as providing much needed funds to educate our merchants and citizens on the harm these products cause.

**I urge you to vote in favor of SB 3.**

Respectfully.

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