



Maryland
CHAPTER

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January 28, 2020

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair
Senate Budget and Tax Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SUPPORT FOR SB 3 – Electronic Smoking Devices, Other Tobacco Products, and Cigarettes - Taxation and Regulation

The Maryland Chapter of the American College of Cardiology would like to offer its strong support for Senate Bill 3 which would increase the state sales tax on cigarettes.

While rates of smoking are, thankfully, in decline, smoking-related illness including heart disease, remain a substantial public health burden. Nicotine is a highly addictive substance which can ensnare teens, often under the influence of peer pressure, and lead to a lifetime of health problems. The Surgeon General has called the rise of the cost of cigarettes ‘one of the most effective tobacco interventions.’¹ The Campaign for Tobacco free kids estimates that an increase of two dollars in the current tax would decrease teen smoking by twenty percent in our state.² Because smoking-related disease takes many years to develop, it is crucial that the youth of our state are discouraged at every turn from starting a habit which can lead to lifelong addiction.

The Maryland Chapter of the American College of Cardiology respectfully requests the committee give SB 3 a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Joseph E. Marine, MD, FACC
President

¹U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), *The Health Consequences of Smoking: 50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General*, Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for ChronicDiseasePreventionandHealthPromotion,OfficeonSmokingandHealth,2014. <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/index.html>.

² Projections are based on research findings that nationally, each 10% increase in the retail price of cigarettes reduces youth smoking by 6.5%, young adult prevalence by 3.25%, adult prevalence by 2%, and total cigarette consumption by about 4% (adjusted down to account for tax evasion effects). However, the impact of the tax increase varies from state-to-state, based on the starting pack price. Significant tax increases generate new revenues because the higher tax rate per pack brings in more new revenue than is lost from the tax-related drop in total pack sales.