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Members of the Committee,

Flavored vapes gave me something I'm sure it did most people who started, a second chance at a BETTER life, but my story is a little different. I turned to vaping, yes, to stop smoking two packs a day plus a can of chew, but also because of the atmosphere of the first shop I ever walked into out of curiosity. I was in a bad place at that time and my local vape shop became my sanctuary. Quickly, I began to see that I wasn't depending on an inhaler anymore, and my quality of breathing had improved as well as my gums and breath. I started working in that same shop in 2014 and went on to manage 3 of their locations. Vaping gave me something suboxone, methadone, and all the other prescribed drugs that doctors had been giving couldn't. A PURPOSE and a place that I could share my experience with and give them the same hope that I had been given. Vaping may have not cured my asthma, but after carrying an inhaler for over 15 years and within 3 months of vaping and not having to do that anymore, shows that there is proof in this pudding also called flavored vape! I have been smoke free for almost 10 years and that because of the flavors that are available to me. As a store owner and father I am faced with knowing that children do use nicotine products, but as a father I make sure that in MY STORE, we always card and strive to keep nicotine products out of children's hands. A flavor ban or a 86% tax will not keep kids from using nicotine, it will force legal taxpaying adults to partake in scrupulous actions, so that they can continue to vape and not smoke. It will also force those same children, to do what they do best, and that's find a new way to get nicotine, and that isn't hard. Lastly, imposing a flavor ban or a hefty tax like the one proposed in this bill would put someone like myself, an ex junkie, who turned his life around out of business. I have been clean for 6 years because of not only flavored vape, but the people in this industry who DO care about the quality of life, and saw something in me and gave me a chance. This would be detrimental because after all the hard work I've put into not being a junkie, criminal, and drain on the society, I would be left severely in debt and potentially homeless. I'm not a quitter and I refuse to sit down and let something be taken away without people hearing my story and the millions of other stories just like mine.