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Patrick Moran - President

Testimony
HB 134 – Business Regulation - Flavored Tobacco Products - Prohibition
Economic Matters
February 10, 2021
Support

AFSCME Council 3 supports the passage of HB 134. This legislation prohibits the manufacture, shipment, import, or sale of flavored tobacco products within the State.

AFSCME Council 3 represents 30,000 State and University employees in Maryland. Indirectly, we also represent the families of our members. Their health and safety are our concern as much as those we legally represent.

Make no mistake: flavored tobacco products are targeted to specific segments of our state's population. Young people, especially Black and Brown young people, are the target audiences which companies seek to lure to become regular customers. This should not surprise anyone, as for-profit businesses make a profit by determining their likeliest customers and marketing to them.

Unlike ripped jeans, skateboards and basketball shoes, flavored tobacco products cause direct health harms to those partaking of the product. Not only do individuals end up with physical harm, but ultimately communities as a whole pay a price in increased health care costs. Prohibiting these products not only makes smart physical sense, it makes smart fiscal sense.

AFSCME supports HB 134 and asks for a favorable report.

Every AFSCME Maryland State and University contract guarantees a right to union representation.
An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.
800.492.1996

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