

## **My Son's Vaping Nightmare**

Good afternoon, my name is Donna Bartlett and I am a concerned mom and parent volunteer with Parents Against Vaping and I thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I support ending the sale of all flavored vaping products and the speedy passage of a clean **HB 134**.

A year ago, my son an honor roll student and a dual sport varsity athlete tried vaping flavored nicotine for the first time. He said it tasted great. Cherry and menthol are his favorite. Yes, menthol is a flavor and in fact is one of the most popular.

The sweet odor was a sign, like so many others. The flash drives that were vape devices, stripped USB cords, empty pods and e-juice containers. I did not see what was happening. It was not until months later and my son had now been vaping for 3 months, every day, 4 to 5 times a day.

How did this happen when he knew the dangers? How did this happen when the age limit was now over 21? But it did and now he could not stop!

The emotional effects were devastating and there were events that neither of us will soon forget...

Like the day he called me from the school bathroom having a panic attack because he knew if he left the stall he would vape with the kids who vaped there every day, all day.

Then there was the night I listened to him crying uncontrollably and asking me through gut wrenching sobs "Mom, why is this happening to me? Why can't I stop?"

Sadly, the physical effects of vaping were just as great. Jacob, a starter player and one who usually played the entire game no longer could

because he could not breathe. No parent should have to watch their child gasp for breath like he did on a field THAT he once dominated.

I do not want any other child to have to deal with the addiction he is dealing with. People need to understand the severe negative effects of vaping, both mentally and physically.

These flavors draw kids into vaping, the extremely high levels of nicotine addicts them and keeps them coming back for more. This epidemic is not going away if our kids are able to buy flavored nicotine products and that is exactly what is happening. The age restriction of 21 is not always enforced. The only way to end this is to remove ALL flavors. We can do this in Maryland NOW with the passage of a clean **HB 134**.

Thank you for your time...