



February 10, 2021

Dear Chairman Davis and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee:

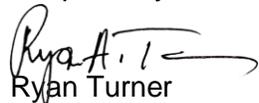
We are writing to you on behalf of Community Law in Action (CLIA) to support HB 134 - "Business Regulation - Flavored Tobacco Products - Prohibition" and to extend our appreciation to the Committee for giving this issue the time and consideration it deserves. We encourage you to pass a clean bill that protects our children and communities from a toxic product that kills 7,500 people in Maryland each year and is actively hooking an entirely new generation of kids.

Since 1999, the youth of Community Law in Action have diligently advocated for legislation that would protect their families and communities. Once again, the youth and adult allies of Community Law in Action are rallying together to support legislation that will protect the well being of youth and adults alike. CLIA supports SB177 because it will work to preserve the health outcomes of children, youth and adults especially in our most vulnerable and marginalized communities. Statistics ostensibly demonstrate the harmful effect that tobacco products have on the health of those exposed – both primarily and secondarily.

As we battle the harmful and deadly pandemic of COVID-19, which is known to impact the lungs of those who fall victim; it is incumbent upon us to examine factors that would exacerbate the intensity of lung impact. In the State of Maryland, approximately 343,000 people have been infected with COVID and 6,900 people have died. Available data does not present how many of those individuals were parents of children and youth between the ages of 0-18. But undoubtedly, those individuals were impacted. If we persist with allowing Big Tobacco to target our communities amidst a ravaging pandemic while both wreak havoc on lung capacity, we will experience a wave of trauma that result from parents losing their children and children losing their parents.

The facts are clear – Big Tobacco kills. If we aren't bold in our actions to face Big Tobacco head on, the consequence will be more lives taken. We urge you to support the passage of a clean HB 134 - "Business Regulation - Flavored Tobacco Products - Prohibition."

Respectfully Submitted,



Ryan Turner

Executive Director

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The Youth of Community Law in Action