



**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House of Delegates,
Economic Matters Committee
February 10, 2021**

**Board of Education
of Howard County**

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**HB0134: FAVORABLE
Business Regulation - Flavored Tobacco Products – Prohibition**

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **Business Regulation - Flavored Tobacco Products – Prohibition** for its potential to directly impact the appeal of tobacco products and e-cigarettes to Howard County youth.

Health Services staff from the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) have seen wide-spread use of e-cigarettes, and flavored products specifically, among Howard County students. As reported in a 2019 *Baltimore Sun* article (<https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/howard/ph-ho-cf-howard-teens-juuling-0314-story.html>) their appeal and detrimental health impacts to local youth is astounding. In 2020, the Board joined a class action lawsuit against JUUL, the largest manufacturer of electronic smoking devices, due to their marketing to minors and the product's harmful effects.

Nationally, a 2015 *Journal of American Medicine* article indicated 81% of youth who have used a tobacco product started with a flavored product.

Statistics such as these continue to concern staff, with no real way to prevent student access when their availability in the state abounds. Our mission as a school system is to ensure academic success and social-emotional well-being – including the physical health of students which ultimately impacts their learning. By supporting HB0134/SB0177 to prohibit the manufacture, shipment, import, or sale of flavored tobacco products in Maryland, including electronic smoking devices, the Board hopes to remove this temptation for vulnerable youth.

For these reasons, we urge a FAVORABLE report of HB0134 from this Committee.