

Dated: 23 January 2021

Written testimony to oppose Menthol and Flavor Ban Bill (SB 177)

I, Zak Gillani writing this testimony to ensure all statements in this testimony are true. I own 6 stores in Maryland, which sell menthol cigarettes, flavored cigars, and flavored chewing tobacco. If this ban goes in effect, we will lose 75% of sales adding up to those categories. These sales sum up to 3.3 Million in revenue each year in these 6 stores.

I employ 23 people in these stores. If I lose sales revenue it would force me to lay off employees who are solely dependent on their job, the amount of stress and financial troubles these employees will suffer is beyond explaining.

Not to mention, we will not only lose customers buying the tobacco products but also revenue from customers who stops to buy tobacco with gas and food items and consider our store a one stop shop.

Loss in revenue means loss in profit which would trouble me and my family financially and can force me to shut down businesses.

Ban of any product in one state means gain of business in another state. Just because there is a ban it would not make people stop using the product but drive them to neighboring states to purchase the same product causing local Maryland retailers to lose money.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ZAK GILLANI', written in a cursive, stylized script.

ZAK GILLANI

OWNER