

Greetings,

My name is John Phelps Jr and I am with High's of Baltimore and Carroll Motor Fuels. Carroll Fuel has been in business since 1907 and High's since 1928 and we have hundreds of locations throughout Maryland and employ over 600 people in Maryland. I am writing today to ask you oppose the following:

SB 177 Business Regulations – Flavored Tobacco Products – Prohibition

Bans the sale of all flavored tobacco products including menthol cigarettes and flavor vape products.

SB 273 Electronic Smoking Device Regulations Act of 2021

Restricts the sale of vape products to only vape shops and bans the sale of most flavored vape products.

The banning of menthol cigarettes would have a severely negative impact on our business. Over the past few years we have worked hard to reduce our need to sell tobacco, but the reality is that these products help us keep our stores open and our co-workers employed. We continue to see the cost of doing regular business rise every year with yearly increases as the state works its way to a \$15 minimum wage. A significant portion of our sales come from the selling of menthol cigarettes and other tobacco products like cigars, dip, and snus. These sales are essential in helping us be able to continue to grow and increase our work force.

We fully complied with the state's decision to ban flavored e-cigarettes and no longer sell them. We have every store associate complete training on selling tobacco products to minors and have them frequently retake the course throughout the year. We have implemented a 3rd party company to do compliance checks to ensure we are executing these practices in the stores through unannounced checks. We have invested in upgrades and updates to our point of sale systems which allow for further checks and accuracy when selling age restricted items. I do not think only vape shops should be able to sell vapor and e-cigarette products as we have put in place numerous measures to prevent illegal transactions.

Thank you for considering our thoughts and if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.