



## **Testimony of Shellie Bressler, Parent Advocate for DC/Maryland/Virginia for Parents Against Vaping in favor of SB 0099**

Good afternoon, my name is Shellie Bressler and I am a parent and the DC/Maryland/Virginia Advocate for Parents Against Vaping e-cigarettes, a national grassroots organization formed in response to the youth vaping epidemic.

Families across the state of Maryland are dealing with children addicted to nicotine, thanks to the predatory practices of Big Tobacco in targeting teens to become their next customers. Over the past two decades, the Maryland Department of Health, along with their counterparts across the nation, have worked hard in educating young people of the dangers of smoking, and this is a generation that never would have initiated the use of tobacco. However now, we are seeing all that hard work backslide and tobacco use rates of teens is going up.

I am here today to express my support for SB 0099, the Cigarettes, Tobacco Products, and Electronic Smoking Devices – Local Law Authorization, introduced by Senator Kramer. This bill would allow Maryland counties and municipalities to enact and enforce their own tobacco related ordinances. Maryland is a big and diverse state. Having a one size fits all policy for tobacco control. A policy that addressed the needs of the city of Baltimore might not be appropriate for Salisbury, Frostburg, or for Waldorf. Preemption prohibits local governments from having any ability to respond to the needs of their communities. In addition, preemption takes away the local control of cities and counties along state borders. These cities and towns will be at a disadvantage in not being able to respond with similar ordinances should Delaware, the District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, or Pennsylvania change their rules or enforcement activities.

The parents of Maryland are looking for more tools to address the issues of sales of these products to their children. Eliminating the ability for localities to enact ordinances to address sales and enforcement makes the fight to save their kids from a lifelong nicotine addiction that much harder.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. On behalf of the families of Maryland dealing with nicotine addicted children, I ask that you support the passage of SB0099.