



Support: SB 259 Business Regulation- Flavored Tobacco Products- Prohibition

2/12/2023

Maryland Senate
Finance Committee
3 East
Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the pediatric nurse practitioners (PNPs) and fellow pediatric-focused advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNP) Chesapeake Chapter, I am writing to express our support of **SB 259 Business Regulation- Flavored Tobacco Products- Prohibition**.

Artificial and natural flavors are added to nicotine to improve flavor and taste by reducing the harshness, bitterness, and astringency. Research has shown that sweet-tasting flavors are particularly appealing to youth and young adults (FDA, 2019). Menthol cools and numbs the throat and reduces the harshness of tobacco smoke, making menthol cigarettes more appealing for kids who are starting to smoke. Over half of youth smokers use menthol cigarettes. A comprehensive FDA scientific analysis, issued in 2013, concluded that menthol cigarettes 1) increase smoking initiation and progression to regular smoking among youth and young adults; 2) increase nicotine dependence (addiction); and 3) reduce success in quitting smoking.

According to the latest data from the 2022 National Youth Tobacco Survey, 14.1% of high school students and 3.3% of middle school students – over 2.5 million kids altogether – were current e-cigarette users. Kids aren't just experimenting with e-cigarettes. Many are using these products most days or every day, a sure sign they're becoming addicted. Over 46% of high school e-cigarette users are vaping at least 20 days a month and 30% are daily users. In total, 700,000 middle and high school students are vaping every single day.

Flavored products are driving this epidemic. In fact, 85% of youth e-cigarette users use flavored products. In the past few years, kids have shifted dramatically to disposable and menthol e-cigarettes, two categories of products that were left on the market under current federal restrictions. These shifts show that the only way to end this crisis is to eliminate all flavored e-cigarettes.

In addition, acute nicotine exposure can be toxic. Children and adults have been poisoned by swallowing, breathing, or absorbing liquid through their skin or eyes. The ability to flavor nicotine also increases these risks.



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MD: CHESAPEAKE

Five states — Massachusetts, California, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island — have thus far enacted statewide flavored tobacco and vape product bans. In addition over 360 localities have passed restrictions on the sale of flavored tobacco products. Ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products — including flavored e-cigarettes, menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars — is critical to stopping the youth e-cigarette epidemic and creating the first tobacco-free generation.

For these reasons the Maryland Chesapeake Chapter of NAPNAP extends their support to **SB 259 Business Regulation- Flavored Tobacco Products- Prohibition and requests a favorable report.**

The pediatric advanced practice nurses of your state are grateful to you for your attention to these crucial issues. The members of Chesapeake Chapter of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners are committed to improving the health and advocating for Maryland's pediatric patients. If we can be of any further assistance, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Lindsay J. Ward, the Chesapeake Chapter President at 410-507-3642 or lindsayjward@hotmail.com.

Sincerely,

Lindsay J. Ward CRNP, RN, IBCLC, MSN, BSN
Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner- Pediatric Primary Care
International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)
Chesapeake Chapter President

Evgenia Ogordova

Evgenia Ogordova-DNP
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)
Chesapeake Chapter Legislative Chair