

March 1, 2024

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and members of the Economic Matters Committee,

My name is Kyle Feldman, and I am the Executive Vice President of Government Affairs for Century Distributors, located in Rockville, Maryland. I am here today to express my strong opposition to HB1414, a bill that proposes a significant increase in taxes on e-vapor devices from 12% to 30%.

First and foremost, I want to emphasize that users of e-vapor devices are already paying their fair share of taxes. The current tax rate of 12% adequately reflects the value and usage of these products. Increasing the tax burden to 30% would be excessive and unfair to the consumers who rely on these devices as an alternative to traditional tobacco products.

It is important to consider the potential unintended consequences of such a tax increase. Higher taxes on e-vapor devices may discourage current smokers from transitioning to a less harmful alternative. Research has shown that e-vapor devices can be an effective tool in harm reduction and smoking cessation efforts. By making these devices less affordable, it could hinder public health progress and potentially push individuals back towards traditional tobacco products.

Furthermore, it is also important to note that this proposed tax increase is equivalent to taxing the beer glass. Just as the glass is merely a vessel for the beer, the e-vapor device is simply a tool for delivering nicotine or other substances. Taxing the device itself disproportionately targets the users, rather than addressing the underlying issue of substance consumption.

In conclusion, I urge you to vote against HB1414 and its proposed tax increase on e-vapor devices. These consumers are already paying their fair share of tax on their vapor products. Instead, please focus on promoting harm reduction and supporting individuals in their efforts to quit smoking, rather than imposing excessive taxes that may hinder their progress.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kyle Feldman



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