



HOUSE BILL 238

Public Health – Clean Indoor Air Act - Revisions

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE

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For the Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO)

Position: Support – February 20, 2024

The Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO), the professional association of the chief executives of the state's 24 local public health departments (LHDs), supports HB 238. This bill provides important updates to the state's Clean Indoor Air Act (CIAA) to include vaping of tobacco products as well as aerosols containing hemp and cannabis. The CIAA aims to preserve and improve the health, comfort, and environment of the people of Maryland by limiting exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. Since its passage in 2007, rates of cigarette smoking among youth and adults have decreased and exposure to secondhand smoke has been reduced. The current omission of vaping puts Marylanders at risk from the potential harmful effects of exposure to smoke and aerosols from vaping products.

A 2016 report from the U.S. Surgeon General, "The Health Consequences of Smoking-50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General," concluded that secondhand aerosol emissions contain, "nicotine; ultrafine particles; flavorings such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to serious lung disease; volatile organic compounds such as benzene, which is found in car exhaust; and heavy metals, such as nickel, tin, and lead."

Failure to ban vaping indoors may serve to normalize vape use, a particular concern given the increasing use of electronic smoking devices among youth. Despite important gains in reducing rates of cigarette use among youth, a significant percentage of young people in Maryland report the use of vaping products. According to the 2021 Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey:

- 32.3% of high school students have ever used an electronic vapor product
- 14.7% of high school students currently use an electronic vapor product
- 23.3% of high school students were in the same room with someone who was smoking on at least one day during the 7 days before the survey

HB 238 brings the CIAA into alignment with 17 other states and the District of Columbia that have already enacted laws prohibiting the use of e-cigarettes in indoor areas. HB 238 will limit secondhand exposure to emissions from vaping products, reduce indoor air contamination, and protect the health of Maryland residents.

For these reasons, the Maryland Association of County Health Officers submits this letter of support for HB 238. For more information, please contact Ruth Maiorana, MACHO Executive Director at rmaiora1@jhu.edu or 410-937-1433. *This communication reflects the position of MACHO.*

¹ https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/e-cigarettes/pdfs/2016_sgr_entire_report_508.pdf

¹ <https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/ccdpc/Documents/2021MDH%20Summary%20Tables.pdf>

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/statesystem/factsheets/ecigarette/EcigSFIA.html>