

[Memorandum In Support of HB 1180– Delegate Wilson]

[House Economic Matters Committee

February 20, 2024]

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network is the nonprofit nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society. ACS CAN empowers cancer patients, survivors, their families and other experts on the disease, amplifying their voices and public policy matters that are relevant to the cancer community at all levels of government. We mobilize our powerful grassroots network of cancer advocacy volunteers to bring awareness to lawmakers like yourself on cancer issues that matter to your constituents.

ACS CAN supports HB 1180 inclusive of the technical amendments being offered by the bill sponsor.

This year it is estimated that 36,410 Marylanders will hear the chilling phrase “you have cancer.” It’s also estimated that almost 10,310 will die from cancer.

Tobacco use has been found to be one of the primary drivers of cancer-related health disparities because its use disproportionately impacts people based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, mental health, income level, education level, and geographic location. Achieving health equity relies heavily on eliminating tobacco use. ACS CAN is pursuing fact-based tobacco control policies at the local, state and federal levels that aim to reduce disparities and improve health outcomes for everyone.

To that end, HB 1180 truly looks to “modernize” existing law in Maryland through a variety of changes that, taken together, tightens regulatory requirements and enhances the State’s ability to both enforce existing law and push back on the marketing and availability of tobacco products, particularly to underage boys and girls. Among the highlights HB 1180 would address includes:

- Displaying cigarettes and other tobacco products by licensed providers would be restricted to behind the counter;
- Where electronic smoking devices are sold would be limited;
- Age identification checks would be strengthened;
- License fees would be increased for the first time in decades while increasing enforcement checks on retailers.

ACS CAN thanks the Chair and committee for the opportunity to testify and urges a favorable report of HB 1180.