

February 21st, 2025

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby and Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Maryland House Bill 1441, which authorizes the Executive Director of the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission (ATCC) and the Attorney General to take action regarding the licensure of electronic smoking devices manufacturers, wholesalers, importers, retailers, and vape shop vendors. While I understand the intent of the bill, I believe it could have unintended and detrimental consequences for businesses, consumers, and the broader community.

As the bill proposes, electronic smoking devices manufacturers would be required to execute and deliver annual certifications to the Attorney General. While it is essential to regulate the safety of vaping products, this requirement adds a significant administrative burden on an industry that already faces numerous challenges. Small and independent vape shops, which form a critical part of Maryland's retail landscape, could be disproportionately affected by these additional compliance costs and complexities.

Furthermore, the expanded authority granted to the ATCC and the Attorney General to take action in certain circumstances could create a vague regulatory environment. Without clear, defined guidelines, businesses may face uncertainty about the legal and regulatory landscape, potentially stifling innovation and driving up costs for consumers.

I also have concerns about the broader implications of this bill for personal freedom and consumer choice. Many adults who use electronic smoking devices have chosen them as a means to reduce harm compared to traditional tobacco products. Overregulation could push these individuals toward unregulated and potentially more dangerous sources for their products.

Instead of adding more layers of bureaucratic oversight, I would encourage the legislature to focus on clear, science-backed regulation that ensures product safety without overburdening small businesses or limiting consumer access to safer alternatives to smoking. A more balanced approach could better serve Maryland's goals of public health protection while supporting responsible business growth.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my concerns. I respectfully urge you to oppose Maryland HB 1441 and seek more balanced and practical solutions for regulating electronic smoking devices.

Kind Regards,

Nitanel ArieH