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Delegate C.T. Wilson

Economic Matters Committee, Chairman

Low House Office Building, Room 231

6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

February 21, 2025

Re: Testimony on HB 1241 (SB 0842) - *Other Tobacco Products and Electronic Smoking Devices- Seizure and Wholesaler Licensure Requirements*

Position: Favorable

Subject: Protecting Vulnerable Communities – Support HB 1241

Dear Chairman Wilson,

As a faith leader and community advocate in Baltimore City, I am writing to urge your support for HB 1241. I am the lead administrator at Masjid Ul Haqq - Baltimore (MUHB). Outside of my role at MUHB, my work focuses on improving health and equity in underserved communities, where the impact of youth tobacco use is particularly severe. I support this bill because it will help protect the most vulnerable members of our society.

Thank you Chairman Wilson, Delegate Amprey and Chairwoman Beidle, for your leadership in sponsoring this legislation.

Tobacco companies have long targeted low-income and minority communities with aggressive marketing tactics. As a result, youth in these areas are disproportionately affected by tobacco use, leading to higher rates of addiction and long-term health complications.

Maryland already spends **\$3.14 billion** annually on tobacco-related healthcare costs, and too many of our young people are being funneled into a cycle of addiction that is difficult to break. We must take a stand against Big Tobacco's predatory tactics.

HB 1241 is a necessary measure to strengthen enforcement against illegal e-cigarette sales and regulate these products like other tobacco items. This legislation is critical to protecting Maryland's youth—especially those in at-risk communities.

With **81% of Maryland voters** supporting action against Big Tobacco, I urge you to vote in favor of HB 1241.

Thank you for considering this vital issue.

Sincerely,

Moses Hammett

Moses Hammett

MUHB Board Member, Community Advocate & Faith Leader