



February 21, 2025

Members of the Maryland House Economic Matters Committee,

President

Kyle Feldman
National Convenience
Distributors
Farmingdale, NY

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 918/House Bill 1441, which aims to fairly regulate the electronic smoking device (ESD) industry in Maryland. This important legislation will modernize and strengthen the state's approach to e-vapor products, ensuring a safer and more consistent marketplace while addressing public health concerns.

**Vice President/
Comptroller**

Barry Margolis
Cooper-Booth
Wholesale
Mountville, PA

Aligning with Established Cigarette Regulations

The proposed legislation draws a logical parallel to existing regulations for traditional cigarettes. Under current law, cigarette manufacturers are required to apply to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) each year for certification and inclusion in a product directory. This longstanding requirement, in place for more than 20 years, ensures proper oversight of cigarette products. SB918/HB1441 establishes a similar system for ESDs, creating a product directory that ensures transparency and accountability in the e-vapor marketplace.

Vice President

Mike Kelley
Core-Mark
Gardiner, ME

The bill also mirrors existing cigarette laws by requiring face-to-face transactions for ESD sales, effectively prohibiting online sales. This provision ensures that the age verification process mirrors that of traditional cigarettes, preventing underage access to harmful products.

Executive Director

VJ Mayor, CAE
NEWA
Portland, ME

Licensure for ESD Businesses

This bill requires all businesses involved in the manufacturing, distribution, or sale of ESDs in Maryland to obtain a specific ESD license. Currently, businesses selling tobacco products are exempt from obtaining such a license for ESD sales. Removing this exemption allows the state to have a clear understanding of who is operating in the ESD marketplace, improving the state's ability to enforce the law and protect public health.

The bill sets licensing fees for ESD manufacturers, distributors, and retailers at \$300, bringing consistency and fairness to the regulatory framework. This helps ensure that all entities involved in the sale of ESDs are held to the same standard, promoting a level playing field in the industry.

Environmental Responsibility

SB918/HB1441 also introduces a crucial provision to ensure that ESD manufacturers are responsible for the disposal of toxic chemicals in their products. The bill requires ESD businesses to contribute escrow funds to manage the disposal of these substances, mirroring the environmental responsibilities imposed on cigarette manufacturers. This step is vital to reducing the environmental impact of ESDs and protecting Maryland's natural resources.

Improved Enforcement and Public Health Protection

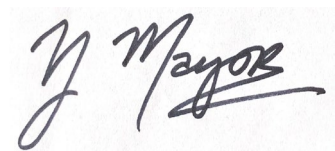
One of the most important aspects of this legislation is the enhancement of Maryland's ability to enforce ESD regulations. The bill grants the Alcohol and Tobacco Commission (ATCC) the authority to conduct unannounced inspections of ESD businesses, just as is done for cigarettes. These inspections will help ensure that businesses are complying with the law and protecting consumers from harmful practices.

Additionally, the Department of Health is empowered to refer violations to ATCC, creating a streamlined process for enforcement across agencies. The penalties for non-compliance, including monetary fines, license revocation, and enforcement of Maryland's Consumer Protection Act, are designed to uphold the integrity of the marketplace and safeguard public health.

The proposed SB918/HB1441 legislation is a crucial step forward in ensuring that the e-vapor industry in Maryland is properly regulated, fair, and accountable. By aligning ESD regulations with those already in place for traditional tobacco products, this bill promotes a safer marketplace, helps prevent underage access, and ensures that businesses adhere to strict environmental and health standards. I strongly urge you to support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "VJ Mayor", with a stylized flourish at the end.

VJ Mayor, CAE