

## **Hearing In The Maryland House Of Delegates Set for February 18, 2025**

Scott Webber  
Founding Member  
Vaping Awareness Public Education [V.A.P.E.] Society  
8803 Seven Locks Road  
Bethesda, MD 20817

### **TESTIMONY ON HB0804 FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

#### **‘Multifamily Dwellings – Smoking Policies’**

**TO:** Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

My name is Scott Webber, resident of Montgomery County, Maryland, and Co-Founder of the Vaping Awareness Public Education Society, submitting this testimony in support of HB 0804 with amendments.

The VAPESociety is strongly in favor policies that clarify, limit, and reduce tobacco smoking because medical science and all available statistics reveal smoking to be the single largest contributor to preventable death in the US and Maryland, [7500+] and the most costly. [>\$3 Billion] [See attached] However, the conflation of ‘smoking’ and ‘vaping’ as being the same – or even similar - is wrong, both in physical science, and in their relative harms and costs.

The simple reality is that ‘smoking’ involves... smoke; a byproduct of combustion [aka: burning] Vaping does not involve ANY form of combustion, and therefore, actually defining – in LAW – something as ‘smoking’ that has nothing to do with ‘smoke’ is both incorrect as a matter of simple fact, but becomes irresponsible when it becomes an outright falsehood involving public health.

The VAPESociety respectfully requests that the language be changed to differentiate the substances and processes to conform with all medical science and nature.

#### **PROPOSED AMENDMENT(S):**

Define ‘SMOKING’ and ‘VAPING’ separately.

In each section where the word ‘SMOKING’ is found, replace with ‘SMOKING AND VAPING’ or ‘SMOKING OR VAPING’ as applicable to conform with the laws of science and nature.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a FAVORABLE report on HB0804 with the Proposed Amendment(s), *supra*.

Most Sincerely,

~Scott Webber

# The Toll of Tobacco in Maryland

## The Toll of Tobacco in Maryland

High school students who smoke	3.2% (10,200)
High school students who use e-cigarettes	14.3%
Male high school students who smoke cigars (female use much lower)	4.5%
Kids (under 18) who try cigarettes for the first time each year	8,100
Adults in Maryland who smoke	9.1% (438,400)

## Deaths in Maryland from Smoking

Adults who die each year from their own smoking	7,500
Proportion of cancer deaths in Maryland attributable to smoking	26.0%

Smoking kills more people than alcohol, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined — and thousands more die from other tobacco-related causes — such as fires caused by smoking (more than 1,000 deaths/year nationwide) and smokeless tobacco use.

## Smoking-Caused Monetary Costs in Maryland

Annual health care costs in Maryland directly caused by smoking	\$3.14 billion
Medicaid costs caused by smoking in Maryland	\$619.7 million
Residents' state & federal tax burden from smoking-caused government expenditures	\$838 per household

Smoking-caused productivity losses in Maryland	\$6.4 billion
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Amounts do not include health costs caused by exposure to secondhand smoke, smoking-caused fires, or use of non-cigarette tobacco products. Productivity losses are from smoking-caused premature death and illness that prevent people from working. Tobacco use also imposes costs such as damage to property.

## Tobacco Industry Influence in Maryland

Annual tobacco industry marketing expenditures nationwide	\$8.6 billion
Estimated portion spent for Maryland marketing each year	\$95.4 million

Published research studies have found that kids are twice as sensitive to tobacco advertising as adults and are more likely to be influenced to smoke by cigarette marketing than by peer pressure. One-third of underage experimentation with smoking is attributable to tobacco company advertising.

[View sources of information.](#)

More detailed fact sheets on tobacco's toll in each state are available by emailing [factsheets@tobaccofreekids.org](mailto:factsheets@tobaccofreekids.org)

*Last updated Aug. 16, 2024*

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