



Tree House Project, Inc.

Senator Pam Beidle
Finance Committee, Chairman
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

February 21, 2025

RE: SB 842 - Other Tobacco Products and Electronic Smoking Devices - Seizure and Wholesaler Licensure Requirements

POSITION: FAVORABLE

Dear Chairwoman Beidle,

I am writing to you as a parent and community advocate living in Baltimore, to express my support for SB842, and thank you for your leadership in sponsoring this bill. As a mother and a mentor to young women, I am deeply invested in protecting their health, rights, and future. I want my children and the young women I guide to grow up in a world where they have every opportunity to succeed without unnecessary risks to their well-being. It is our duty to put safeguards in place that prevent harmful influences from jeopardizing their potential. This bill is an important measure to ensure that young women have the support and protection they need to make positive, informed choices for their lives.

Despite progress in tobacco control, the problem of youth access to tobacco products, particularly e-cigarettes, remains significant. Data indicates that over 48,000 Maryland high school students self-report that they use tobacco products, a number that likely falls short of the true total. The marketing strategies and new products like flavored e-cigarettes target and hook kids, Big Tobacco's next generation of customers.

The impact of youth tobacco use is both a public health and economic burden. Maryland incurs annual healthcare costs of approximately \$3.14 billion directly related to smoking, and 27.5% cancer-related Maryland deaths can be traced to tobacco use. We must act now to mitigate its influence on the health our children and our communities at large.

As you know, SB842 proposes to grant the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission the same seizure powers over e-cigarettes that it already has over other tobacco products like cigarettes, to make uniform the Commission's oversight and



Tree House Project, Inc.

enforcement authority across the tobacco market. The legislation also brings e-cigarettes in line with regulations for other tobacco products, notably by requiring records keeping for the sale of e-cigarettes. These steps are crucial for ensuring the same healthcare and public health strategies and enforcement that protect Maryland's youth from products like cigarettes are also available for e-cigarettes.

The need for this legislation is broadly recognized. In 2024, polling showed eighty-one percent of Maryland voters supported action against Big Tobacco to safeguard our children. I urge your committee to vote in favor of SB 842, and continue your strong track record of protecting our children from the dangers of tobacco.

Thank you for your consideration and for taking a stand with me.

Sincerely,

Dajanae Williams

Dajanae Williams

Mentor - Tree House Project, Inc.