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Senator Pam Beidle

Finance Committee, Chairman

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

February 25, 2025

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

Position: Favorable

Subject: Protecting Our Children from E-Cigarettes – Support SB 0842

Dear Chairman Beidle

I am writing to you as a Mother of two young children living in Baltimore City, to express my strong support for SB 0842. As a parent, I have witnessed firsthand how easily young people are exposed to tobacco products, particularly e-cigarettes. I support this bill because I want to ensure a healthier future for my children and their peers.

I deeply appreciate your past efforts to protect our youth from tobacco, as well as Chairwoman Beidle and Delegate Amprey for their leadership in sponsoring this critical legislation.

Despite the progress made in tobacco control, youth vaping remains a major issue. Reports show that over 48,000 Maryland high school students use tobacco products—a number that is likely even higher in reality. Flavored e-cigarettes and targeted marketing strategies make it easy for Big Tobacco to lure kids into addiction, creating long-term health consequences.

The impact of youth tobacco use is devastating—not only for families like mine but for our entire state. Maryland faces **\$3.14 billion** in annual healthcare costs directly related to smoking, and tobacco contributes to **27.5% of cancer-related deaths** in our state. We need to take immediate action to reduce the availability and appeal of these products to our children.

SB 0842 would empower the **Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission** with the same seizure powers for e-cigarettes that it already has for other tobacco products. It would also require record-keeping for e-cigarette sales—important steps toward curbing youth access to these harmful products.

Public support for this issue is clear: **81% of Maryland voters** want stronger measures to keep tobacco products out of kids' hands. I urge you to vote in favor of SB 0842 and continue leading efforts to protect Maryland's children.

Thank you for considering this important legislation.

Samirah Franklin