

SB0918: “Business Regulation - Electronic Smoking Devices Manufacturers -
Certifications”

Hearing February 27, 2025 at 1pm

Dear Maryland Senator Gile:

My name is Bethea Kleykamp, and I am a PhD-trained scientist and have studied nicotine and tobacco for the past 23 years. I have no affiliation with the nicotine or tobacco industry. I have also been a Maryland voter and taxpayer for 17 years. I urge you to reject HB1441, which could restrict access to reduced risk products while smoked tobacco products remain easily accessible.

According to science, e-cigarettes are not smoking devices—they do not burn tobacco, contain tobacco, or produce carbon monoxide. As noted by the FDA, they are generally a lower-risk alternative for adults who smoke. In addition, the Cochrane Collaboration, the gold standard for unbiased scientific analysis, reviewed data from nearly 30,000 people and found that e-cigarettes are more effective than standard quit aides like the nicotine patch or gum. A separate Cochrane Review found that switching from smoking to e-cigarettes significantly reduces exposure to harmful chemicals.

We have known for decades that smoking—not nicotine—is the primary cause of tobacco-related disease. Nicotine is not a direct cause of cancer or respiratory disease. That’s why nicotine replacement products like the patch and gum exist. Yet even when combined with behavioral therapy, traditional quit aids fail 85% of the time.

These traditional methods for quitting smoking are not sufficient. Smoking rates among middle-aged and older adults in the U.S. and Maryland now exceed those of young adults and are rising among those in poverty (*Journal of the American Medical Association*). In Maryland, 1 in 10 people still smoke. I would also like to note that smoking and e-cigarette use are at the lowest levels recorded among youth in 10 years.

E-cigarettes aren’t risk-free, but science tells us they are far safer than smoking and can help people quit. If HB1441 passes, thousands of Marylanders could lose access to a proven tool that could help them finally stop smoking.

Maryland should lead with science in reducing smoking-related death and disease—not create barriers to lower-risk alternatives like e-cigarettes. This bill is not a commonsense approach. It creates extreme barriers to people obtaining safer nicotine products and ignores scientific evidence. Please reject HB1441.

Regards,

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