

Hello, my name is Kyle Vega and I strongly oppose Bill SB0918.

This bill is essentially another attempt to ban vaping across the state, leaving only Big Tobacco with the resources to comply. Small businesses like mine and those we work with will be unable to meet the financial and regulatory demands this bill imposes. Leaving consumers without little option but to go back to smoking and my employees without a job.

Maryland is already facing a significant budget deficit, and this bill's vague and subjective language gives the Attorney General almost sole discretion over compliance. With no clear framework for enforcement, implementing this bill will only drain additional state resources, especially when we can't even manage current compliance, let alone address issues like tracking taxes or ensuring proper licensing.

Unless this bill includes provisions to regulate interstate travel and online sales, it will only fuel the growth of a dangerous black market in Maryland. The reality is that this bill will put small businesses out of operation, causing long-term harm to our local economy.

Instead of this approach, I'd much prefer to see better licensing and more effective enforcement strategies that ensure the state collects the proper taxes and that these products remain available to adults. This would help prevent a return to high-nicotine Big Tobacco products or a return to smoking altogether.

Thank you,

Kyle Vega