



## Testimony Opposing S.B. No 164

April L. Meyers

Advisor, Connecticut Chapter of the Smoke-Free Alternatives Trade Association

Public Health Committee

March 20, 2018

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Public Health Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the members of Connecticut Chapter of the Smoke-Free Alternatives Trade Association (CT SFATA) to urge the members of the Public Health Committee to reject S.B. 164, which seeks to prohibit adults aged 18-20 from purchasing vapor products (also known as electronic cigarettes), or alternatively, omit vapor products from the bill.

CT SFATA is comprised of family-owned retail vapor product businesses whose revenues will be harmed by passage of this bill and whose ability to transition adult smokers onto a much less harmful product will be significantly impeded. This bill will will punish adults who are already using tobacco products by removing their access to what is the most popular alternative to deadly combustible tobacco on the market and what the FDA is now exploring as a viable harm reduction product.

The National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine recently released a report last year concluding that vapor products “contain fewer numbers and lower levels of toxic substances than conventional cigarettes<sup>1</sup>” and may help adults transition away from smoking. As owners of vapor product retail stores, we can attest to the positive experience of our customers, many of whom struggled for years to put down cigarettes before finding a better alternative in vapor products.

The American Cancer Society also recently issued a statement proclaiming “The ACS recommends that clinicians support all attempts to quit the use of combustible tobacco and work with smokers to eventually stop using any tobacco product, including e-cigarettes.” This should include 18, 19, and 20-year-olds who smoke.

The individuals you have selected to isolate in this bill have been deemed legal adults capable of making decisions. They are able to apply for a loan, to vote, to enlist in armed services, to be married and have children and are legal and finically responsible for their own lives. This law sends a clear and concise message to this population that they do not have the mental capacity to make very basic decisions regarding their health, yet have the freedom make other health decisions on their behalf without an adult present or government intervention.

This bill is counterproductive to the long term health and the best interest of Connecticut. We implore you to reject the proposal, or alternatively, remove vapor products from the bill.

Sincerely,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Public Health Consequences of E-Cigarettes*, January 23, 2018, National Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine



April L. Meyers

President, Board of Directors  
Smoke-Free Alternatives Trade Association

On behalf of Smoke-Free Alternatives Trade Association, Connecticut Chapter

About SFATA:

Smoke-Free Alternatives Trade Association (SFATA) advocates for a reasonably regulated U.S. marketplace which allows our member companies to provide smoke-free products to adult consumers that are an attractive choice, while promoting a positive public image for vapor products and educating businesses in our industry. We oppose all additional tax on our products beyond the normal taxes applied to any other consumer electronic products sold. We believe an excise tax on vapor products is nothing more than an effort by politicians to fill their state coffers on the backs of former smokers, who apparently are never allowed to stop paying cigarette excise taxes, even after they stop buying cigarettes.