



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

MICHELLE H. SEAGULL | COMMISSIONER

Testimony of Michelle Seagull Commissioner of Consumer Protection

Public Health Committee Public Hearing, March 4, 2019

H.B. 7200 “AN ACT PROHIBITING THE SALE OF CIGARETTES, TOBACCO PRODUCTS, ELECTRONIC NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND VAPOR PRODUCTS TO PERSONS UNDER AGE TWENTY-ONE”

Senator Abrams, Senator Somers, Representative Steinberg, Representative Petit and Honorable Members of the Public Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony about HB 7200, An Act Prohibiting the Sale of Cigarettes, Tobacco Products, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems and Vapor Products to Persons Under Age Twenty-One.

Like the title suggests, this proposed legislation would prohibit the sale of cigarettes, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems and vapor products to persons under age twenty-one. It would also require the Department of Revenue Services and the Department of Consumer Protection to enforce current statutory provisions as well as the additional provisions in this proposal.

DCP commends the Public Health Committee for raising this bill and understands the significant health implications that these products have on our society. SB 877, An Act Concerning Revenue Items to Implement the Governor's Budget, which DCP enthusiastically supports, also addresses this serious threat to our public health by raising the age of tobacco products to twenty-one.

While DCP is responsible for registering manufacturers and dealers of electronic nicotine delivery systems and vapor products, we are not responsible for enforcing any of the statutory prohibitions and requirements surrounding the sale of tobacco. There are currently 33 manufacturer registrations and 1,196 dealer registrations in Connecticut. Because HB 7200 would vastly expand our regulatory scope with regard to these entities, we would need additional administrative, investigatory and legal staff as well as other resources to implement this proposal.

The Department respectfully suggests that this committee consider adopting the language in Sections 47 through 53 of SB 877, which would further protect public health without adding a significant administrative and investigatory burden on state agencies.

We look forward to working with this committee as well as our sister agencies and the Office of the Governor on this very important issue. Please let our Legislative Director, Leslie O'Brien, know if you have questions.