

To whom it may concern,

I, Tyler A. Napper, support the S.B. No. 326 (AN ACT PROHIBITING THE SALE OF FLAVORED CIGARETTES, TOBACCO PRODUCTS, ELECTRONIC NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEMS, AND VAPOR PRODUCTS) bill. I am a community organizer for the social justice firm known as The Voices of Women of Color and the IT Director for the Urban League of Greater Hartford Young Professionals Group. I am honored to hold the titles above and I want to make sure that our youth, (especially the ones that are disenfranchised) aren't exposed to nicotine at a young age.

We are all aware of the covert racism and systemic oppression that has been placed on black and brown communities in the state of Connecticut and the United States of America. Now we must figure out ways to not only remediate these issues but also prevent future issues. Studies have shown that e-cigarette companies like Juul market their products to a younger and blacker audience; hence why many of the bodegas and gas stations in the North End and Frog Hollow neighborhoods have their posters next to their candy stands.

If we pass this bill we can prevent my community from dying at an early age. It is saddening to know that my community is susceptible to not only being exposed to pollutants but also having higher rates of pre-diabetic diagnoses (these public health factors being correlated to a greater likelihood of dying from COVID-19), that is why I urge you to limit the sell of nicotine to our youth.

If we do not pass this bill then the public health concerns that we are already aware of will not only persist but will exacerbate our current public health crisis and these e-cigarette vendors will continue to falsely advertise and sell their life-threatening products to our youth.

Therefore, I urge the committee to support SB 326.

Tyler A. Napper