

I do not support HB 4115, and after hearing testimony today in Human Services and Housing Committee, I ask you to oppose it.

I was a smoker for over 20 years, and I recently quit when a friend told me about electronic cigarettes and vaping. I was hesitant before that, because I didn't know anything about them. But after doing a lot of reading and research, I realized it was another form of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT, also called THR, tobacco harm reduction) similar to the patch and nicotine gum, neither of which led me to be successful in quitting. As soon as I started vaping, miraculously, I was able to instantly stop smoking, and I spoke with my doctor to understand that while there are still potential risks involved, I would be able to taper my nicotine usage, while not smoking tobacco, which when combusted, we all know, is very unhealthy. I feel better physically and mentally. But now that I've quit, I'm getting that persecuted feeling again. This time though, I can't agree and say "I know, I know, it's bad for me, and those around me."

The fact is, e-cigarettes have not been proven to be unsafe. What is generally agreed upon to date is that it is magnitudes of degrees safer than smoking, both to the user and certainly to bystanders.

E-cigarettes use a liquid which is made of GRAS ingredients and which may or may not contain nicotine, but are not tobacco. In fact, most "e-cigarettes" do not look like cigarettes at all. The vapor they release, if any, is minimal at the discretion of the user, and is not carcinogenic smoke. E-cigarettes aren't cigarettes, and vaping is not smoking.

I understand much more research needs to be done in the area of e-cigarettes and vaping. However I don't think that while we wait for the findings of this research, we should ban everything that we have a question about in an hysterical fashion, ala "reefer madness." If that's the case, then why haven't we banned GMOs (which we can't take back after they are unleashed on the ecosystem), diesel particulates which are a PROVEN CARCINOGEN that our children and the rest of us inhale every day, or BPAs (banned in the EU and Canada) *which are in products specifically made for children*? I am especially horrified that the lobbyists have gotten to your colleagues in the Senate on this last issue.

I would like to make a healthy planet for us all, but not at the expense of personal rights, especially choices that vapers make to be healthier by not smoking.

If we need to come up with revenue to replace the lost tobacco tax revenue, let's work on that as a separate issue.

I support a common-sense approach to legislation that truly allows all of the people of this state lead healthy lives, but do not agree that an uninformed overreaction is a wise approach to legislating, nor do I think that you as legislators should be beholden the money of lobbyists.

I urge you to listen to the people, not the corporations and special interest groups, and then oppose HB 4115. Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

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