

House Committee on Revenue re: HB 2270

Attention Chair, Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Marsh and Findley
Committee Members:

As an owner and operator of two small convenience stores I am asking you to please consider the impact raising cigarettes by \$2.00 per pack will have on small stores such as ours. My wife and I have owned and operated four different convenience stores in Douglas County since 1978 and I can say with confidence in 39 years we have never chosen to raise any retail item by 150 percent. It is an enormous increase and is unfairly aimed directly at only those folks who purchase tobacco products.

If this passes I believe we will lose a portion of our customers who will find other avenues to obtain their tobacco products where they will not be forced to pay the \$2.00 increase per pack. I would hope folks who are discussing this issue would not be naïve enough to think that isn't and won't happen if such an increase goes into effect. It will additionally negatively affect all of the related sales that we lose when those customers move on to other locations to purchase their cigarettes where they will not be charged the increase. The actual tobacco sales will be lost as well as the related sales. Mom and pop convenience stores operate on a slim margin to begin with. We work hard each day to make a profit and the decrease in sales in this product category would greatly impact our profit line. Many of us work our own stores or have only one clerk working a shift and we certainly cannot operate our business with less than one employee per shift in order to stretch our profit margin if this were to pass which would result in lost sales which translates into lost income.

This screams of unfairness to expect the minority of the population who smoke to pay such a huge increase. The time has come to find other more fair solutions.

In conclusions, please take the time to rethink the impact of Bill 2270 and the negative consequences it will have on our customers as well as our businesses.

Frank and Rita Schuchard
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