

Testimony for HB-2158 and HB-2270

Tim O'Dell

Good day to you all. My name is Tim O'Dell. I own and operate Tim's Great Cigars in Wood Village where we sell premium cigars, pipes and pipe tobaccos. No cigarettes, vaping products or paraphernalia whatsoever. I am writing this testimony in opposition to the bill(s) that would seek to remove the 50 cent cap on premium cigars. A few years ago the cap was introduced to replace the high percentage of tax on these cigars with excellent results. Revenues increased as customers learned they could buy from the local retailer instead of the internet; it was a win - win move all around.

To digress now and remove the cap would be a detriment to the livelihood of cigar store operators' state wide. The drastic increase in cigar taxes would surely drive the consumer back to the internet and bring financial hardship to our industry, making our future uncertain to say the least. Speaking for myself (and I know there are many others that would be negatively affected) I would rather look forward to a successful future and maybe one day sell my business to follow more leisurely pursuits with my family rather than watch my business dwindle and eventually have to close the doors. I don't mean to sound over dramatic but that is the picture that customers preferring to buy on the internet paints for us. Please allow the 50 cent cap to stay in place to provide more certainty in our future. Thanks you for listening.

Respectfully,\

Tim O'Dell

Tim's Great Cigars