

Submitter: T. Oliver
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB702

I openly admit my personal bias for the use of nicotine products (30 years) and twice a year, enjoy a cigar, sometimes flavored cigars and personally do not believe prohibition works in stopping product use especially if it is addictive or habit forming.

I stopped smoking cigarettes when my daughter was born in 2011, but I did not stop nicotine use I modified the method by switching to chewing tobacco and vaping. I was able to stop completely all nicotine products after 20 years of smoking American Spirits with the use of VAPES which allowed me to realize just how toxic the tobacco smoke is loaded with so many nasty chemicals.

Vape, is nicotine, salts, and flavoring minus those hundreds of added chemicals and hot harmful smoke found in traditional cigarettes. I think there is a lot of unnecessary bias surrounding Vapes and that it is targeting the youth etc, but I suggest that vapes are healthier than cigarettes as far as the nicotine addiction goes. Vaping helps those that choose to stop smoking stop completely as it did for myself.

Article that points to data in studies that backs my personal statement and testimony above.

Exhibit 1:

"Multiple studies have shown that vaping can help smokers give up cigarettes if they want to quit. But research is beginning to show that vaping may actually incentivize smokers to quit, even when they have no plans to stop."

<https://www.acsh.org/news/2021/12/28/vaping-helps-smokers-quit-%25E2%2580%2594-even-when-they-dont-plan-16023>

From 2021 ACSH article: "In this cohort study, daily e-cigarette use was associated with greater odds of cigarette discontinuation among smokers who initially had no plans to ever quit smoking. These findings support the consideration of smokers who are not planning to quit when evaluating the risk-benefit potential of e-cigarettes for smoking cessation in the population.

Interesting to note that COVID relief dollars were wrapped around targeting vapes and flavored tobacco products: Arguments against the proposal in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2:

<https://www.acsh.org/news/2021/05/05/covid-relief-bill-cuts-e-cigarette-access-new-research-shows-vaping-helps-smokers-quit-15534>

Buried deep in the December 2020 COVID relief bill was an odd provision that had nothing to do with helping Americans financially crippled by the pandemic: a regulation (p 5,139) prohibiting the U.S. Postal Service from shipping “electronic nicotine delivery devices”—e-cigarettes. The final rule, once implemented, won't prohibit all mail carriers from delivering tobacco alternatives, but it will raise the associated compliance costs. The result is that bigger vaping supply companies will pass the added expense on to their customers, and smaller firms will just go out of business. [1]

The implication of such a rule was immediately obvious to adult ex-smokers who quit tobacco with the help of e-cigarettes. As Cato Institute research fellow Trevor Burrus pointed out at the time:

We continue to impose ineffective and harmful restrictions on vaping. We'll see more smokers as a result. Public health, which is supposed to be something we all care about a great deal these days, will suffer.

There was a decent body of evidence in December indicating that vaping is relatively safe and can help smokers give up cigarettes. In the almost five months that have passed since the legislation was enacted, several systematic reviews and studies investigating the smoking-cessation effects of vaping have been published. Our understanding of electronic cigarettes remains limited, but research continues to show that the tobacco alternatives can help smokers reduce or eliminate their cigarette consumption, a clear victory for public health."

I oppose this measure as I do not believe prohibition works, vape products are safer and healthier than cigarettes and for that bad target in the Bill alone this should be rejected flatly.