

The Beverage Baron was started by my father 34 years ago in central VT. We are a family-owned business that has between 22-27 employees.

We are the last independently owned convenience store in the area. We are an 802 spirits, bottle redemption, gas and grocery store.

I am against S18. I could speak to a bunch of reasons but will focus primarily on the financial impact on local business and state tax revenue lost. The massive disconnect between the Joint Fiscal estimate and actual numbers are staggering.

E cigarettes are taxes 92% excise tax, plus 6% sales tax plus 1% local Barre tax. 99%. No other product in Vermont is taxes 99%.

Our 2022 electronic cigarette category total sales are \$736,063.32. that is only electronic sales! Not menthol cigs, flavored tobacco, flavored cigars or snuff products. Of the [\\$736063.32](#) in electronic sales only \$13,534.31 was products not ban by s18. Almost 100% of the electronic category sales are considered flavored per S-18. Not the 20-40% the fiscal report references. Adding in the other ban items in S-18 our one stores flavored e cigs and tobacco generates one million dollars a year in state tax revenue. The state will lose over a million from one store. One store! The store will lose \$200,000 in lost revenue. Revenue used for our payroll. Not profit.

Our payroll is up already \$80,000 from 2021. There is a proposed payroll tax 1% for paid leave that is probable going to pass. Added to the \$200,000 revenue loss from S-18. A bottle handling fee that was set when minimum wage was under \$6 per hour. We simply cannot survive. This is not sustainable to a small business like ours.

Under age e cig use is on a large decline in the US. Down over 50% since 2019. The folks that wrote and support the bill are providing numbers based on 2019 statistics and suppressing the new Vermont numbers. All in order to force this bill through. Vermont numbers have been made available and are over two years behind!. Teen smoking is way down nationwide. The right thing to do is table the bill until the number come out next year. Adult should be able to chose what type of cigar or chewing tobacco they prefer to use. That have zero to do with under age vaping. Under age users are not using wine flavored cigars or pipe tobacco but all these items are included in S18.

Vermont DLC enforcement does an excellent job in compliance. As a store owner we offer a \$50 bonus when an employee passes a state under age sting operations. A failure is automatic termination. We take this very seriously

The illegal market will not card or regulate. Other state show increases in under age vaping when purchased illegally

52% of New Hampshire cigarettes sales are to out of state customers. We already are losing sales to New Hampshire. When smoker go back to combustible cigarettes or purchase out of state we are still on the hook for medical expenses.

