



January 24, 2019

TO: Members of the House Human Services Committee

FROM: Jennifer Costa, ACS CAN, Government Relations Director

SUBJECT: Written Testimony on H.26

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) supports licensing all retailers and wholesale dealers who sell any tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. This allows us to track how tobacco products are coming into our state and how many retailers and wholesale dealers are in the state and where they are located. These requirements also help enforce tobacco control laws and hold licensees accountable.

The FDA and the US Surgeon General have recently called e-cigarette use by youth a public health epidemic. In Vermont, 12% of high school students use e-cigarettes. For this reason, it is important that we update our tobacco control laws to ensure all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, are regulated in the same manner.

Internet sales of tobacco to youth can significantly undermine efforts to protect public health. Young people are much more likely to become addicted to tobacco, in part, because adolescent brains are more sensitive to nicotine. Strong laws restricting the sale of tobacco products to youth play an essential role in stopping a lifetime of addiction and tobacco-related disease before it starts. Yet internet retailers are able to skirt many of the laws designed to prevent brick-and-mortar retailers from selling to kids. With the boom in popularity of e-cigarettes – a product widely available online – we support effective policies to stop the illegal online sale of tobacco to youth.

Federal law specifically preserves state authority to prohibit the shipment of tobacco to individual customers and personal residences within the state and Vermont is one of at least 11 states that have such a law. This bill would expand the law to capture more tobacco products.

We recommend amending the bill to include all tobacco products including e-cigarettes under a comprehensive definition of tobacco products. We have found throughout the country that when separate terms and definitions are created, it becomes difficult to ensure all tobacco products are regulated in the same manner. Separate terms and definitions also pave the way for the tobacco industry to exempt certain products from regulation all together or to apply weaker regulation to certain products, which goes against best practices.

Sincerely,  
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