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H.253

Introduced by Representatives Roberts of Halifax, Arrison of Weathersfield,  
Arsenault of Williston, Berbeco of Winooski, Bos-Lun of  
Westminster, Boyden of Cambridge, Brownell of Pownal,  
Burrows of West Windsor, Buss of Woodstock, Campbell of St.  
Johnsbury, Casey of Montpelier, Christie of Hartford, Cina of  
Burlington, Dolan of Waitsfield, Farlice-Rubio of Barnet,  
Galfetti of Barre Town, Goldman of Rockingham, Graning of  
Jericho, Headrick of Burlington, Hooper of Randolph, Hooper  
of Burlington, Krasnow of South Burlington, Labor of Morgan,  
LaBounty of Lyndon, LaMont of Morristown, Laroche of  
Franklin, Lipsky of Stowe, Logan of Burlington, Maguire of  
Rutland City, McCann of Montpelier, McFaun of Barre Town,  
Minier of South Burlington, Morgan of Milton, Morris of  
Springfield, Morrissey of Bennington, Mulvaney-Stanak of  
Burlington, Nicoll of Ludlow, Nugent of South Burlington,  
Oliver of Sheldon, Patt of Worcester, Pouech of Hinesburg,  
Priestley of Bradford, Sammis of Castleton, Sabilia of Dover,  
Sims of Craftsbury, Small of Winooski, Smith of Derby,  
Stebbins of Burlington, Surprenant of Barnard, Templeman of  
Brownington, Toleno of Brattleboro, Torre of Moretown,

1 Troiano of Stannard, White of Bethel, and Williams of Barre  
2 City

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Health; tobacco; smoking; purchase, use, and possession

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to eliminate  
7 prohibitions on and penalties for the purchase, use, and possession of tobacco  
8 products in Vermont. It would also update and align tobacco-related  
9 terminology and make similar and conforming revisions in relevant statutes.

10 An act relating to eliminating prohibitions and penalties on the purchase,  
11 use, and possession of tobacco products

12 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

13 Sec. 1. 7 V.S.A. chapter 40 is amended to read:

14 CHAPTER 40. TOBACCO PRODUCTS

15 § 1001. DEFINITIONS

16 As used in this chapter:

17 \* \* \*

18 (3) "Tobacco products" means cigarettes, little cigars, roll-your-own  
19 tobacco, snuff, cigars, new smokeless tobacco, and ~~other tobacco products as~~  
20 ~~defined in 32 V.S.A. § 7702~~ any other product manufactured from, derived

1 from, or containing tobacco that is intended for human consumption by  
2 smoking, by chewing, or in any other manner.

3 \* \* \*

4 (8) “Tobacco substitute” means ~~products~~ any product, including an  
5 electronic ~~cigarettes~~ cigarette or other electronic or battery-powered ~~devices~~  
6 device, or any component, part, or accessory thereof, that ~~contain or are~~  
7 contains or is designed to deliver nicotine or other substances into the body  
8 through the inhalation or other absorption of aerosol, vapor, or other emission  
9 and that ~~have~~ has not been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug  
10 Administration for tobacco cessation or other medical purposes. Products that  
11 have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for tobacco  
12 cessation or other medical purposes shall not be considered to be tobacco  
13 substitutes.

14 \* \* \*

15 § 1003. SALE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS; TOBACCO SUBSTITUTES;  
16 TOBACCO PARAPHERNALIA; REQUIREMENTS;  
17 PROHIBITIONS

18 \* \* \*

19 (d) The sale ~~and the purchase~~ of bidis is prohibited. A person who holds a  
20 tobacco license who sells bidis as prohibited by this subsection shall be fined

1 not more than \$500.00. A person who purchases bidis from any source shall  
2 be fined not more than \$250.00.

3 \* \* \*

4 § 1005. ~~PERSONS UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE; POSSESSION OF~~  
5 ~~TOBACCO PRODUCTS; MISREPRESENTING AGE OR~~  
6 ~~PURCHASING TOBACCO PRODUCTS; PENALTY~~

7 ~~(a)(1) A person under 21 years of age shall not possess, purchase, or~~  
8 ~~attempt to purchase tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or tobacco~~  
9 ~~paraphernalia unless the person is an employee of a holder of a tobacco license~~  
10 ~~and is in possession of tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or tobacco~~  
11 ~~paraphernalia to effect a sale in the course of employment.~~

12 ~~(2) A person under 21 years of age shall not misrepresent his or her age~~  
13 ~~to purchase or attempt to purchase tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or~~  
14 ~~tobacco paraphernalia.~~

15 ~~(b) A person who possesses tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or~~  
16 ~~tobacco paraphernalia in violation of subsection (a) of this section shall be~~  
17 ~~subject to having the tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or tobacco~~  
18 ~~paraphernalia immediately confiscated and shall be further subject to a civil~~  
19 ~~penalty of \$25.00. An action under this subsection shall be brought in the~~  
20 ~~same manner as a traffic violation pursuant to 23 V.S.A. chapter 24.~~



1 (b)(1) The Division of Liquor Control shall conduct or contract for  
2 compliance tests of tobacco licensees as frequently and as comprehensively as  
3 necessary to ensure consistent statewide compliance with the prohibition on  
4 sales to persons under 21 years of age of at least 90 percent for buyers who are  
5 between 17 and 20 years of age. ~~An individual under 21 years of age~~  
6 ~~participating in a compliance test shall not be in violation of section 1005 of~~  
7 ~~this title.~~

8 \* \* \*

9 (3) The Division shall report to the House Committee on General,  
10 Housing, and Military Affairs, the Senate Committee on Economic  
11 Development, Housing and General Affairs, and the ~~Tobacco Evaluation and~~  
12 ~~Review Board~~ Substance Misuse Prevention Oversight and Advisory Council  
13 annually, on or before January 15, the methodology and results of compliance  
14 tests conducted during the previous year. The provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 20(d)  
15 (expiration of required reports) shall not apply to the required report to be  
16 made under this subdivision.

17 \* \* \*

18 § 1009. CONTRABAND AND SEIZURE

19 (a) Any cigarettes or other tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, or  
20 tobacco paraphernalia that have been sold, offered for sale, or possessed for  
21 sale in violation of section 1003 or 1010 of this title, 20 V.S.A. § 2757,

1 32 V.S.A. § 7786, or 33 V.S.A. § 1919, and any commercial cigarette rolling  
2 machines possessed or utilized in violation of section 1011 of this title, shall be  
3 deemed contraband and shall be subject to seizure by the Commissioner, the  
4 Commissioner's agents or employees, the Commissioner of Taxes or any agent  
5 or employee of the Commissioner of Taxes, or by any law enforcement officer  
6 of this State when directed to do so by the Commissioner. All ~~cigarettes or~~  
7 ~~other tobacco products~~ items seized under this subsection shall be destroyed.

8 \* \* \*

9 § 1010. INTERNET SALES

10 \* \* \*

11 (d) A violation of this section is punishable as follows:

12 (1) A knowing or intentional violation of this section shall be punishable  
13 by imprisonment for not more than five years or a fine of not more than  
14 \$5,000.00, or both.

15 (2) In addition to or in lieu of any other civil or criminal remedy  
16 provided by law, upon a determination that a person has violated this section,  
17 the Attorney General may impose a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed  
18 \$5,000.00 for each violation. For purposes of this subsection, each shipment  
19 or transport of cigarettes, roll-your-own tobacco, little cigars, ~~or snuff,~~ tobacco  
20 substitutes, or tobacco paraphernalia shall constitute a separate violation.

21 \* \* \*

1 Sec. 2. 4 V.S.A. § 1102 is amended to read:

2 § 1102. JUDICIAL BUREAU; JURISDICTION

3 \* \* \*

4 (b) The Judicial Bureau shall have jurisdiction of the following matters:

5 \* \* \*

6 (4) ~~Violations of 7 V.S.A. § 1005(a), relating to possession of tobacco~~  
7 ~~products by a person under 21 years of age. [Repealed.]~~

8 \* \* \*

9 Sec. 3. 32 V.S.A. § 7702 is amended to read:

10 § 7702. DEFINITIONS

11 As used in this chapter unless the context otherwise requires:

12 \* \* \*

13 (15) “Other tobacco products” means any product manufactured from,  
14 derived from, or containing tobacco that is intended for human consumption by  
15 smoking, by chewing, or in any other manner; ~~including.~~ The term also  
16 includes products sold as a tobacco substitute, as defined in 7 V.S.A.  
17 § 1001(8), ~~and~~ including any liquids, whether nicotine based or not, ~~or~~ and  
18 delivery devices sold separately for use with a tobacco substitute, but shall not  
19 include cigarettes, little cigars, roll-your-own tobacco, snuff, or new smokeless  
20 tobacco as defined in this section.

21 \* \* \*



1       Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

2       This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.