

Dear Representatives,

I was disheartened to see that the Vermont State Legislature is considering legislation to ban the sale of flavored tobacco products at a time when our state and industry are experiencing unprecedented economic shortfalls.

As a retailer who provides jobs and tax revenue to the state of Vermont, I urge you to consider the largescale repercussions of this policy. Firstly, a full flavor ban would imperil my business and endanger my employees' jobs'.

Secondly, this legislation won't even accomplish its goal. Bans DO NOT work. Time and time again, that has been proven. The constitutionally mandated prohibition on alcohol failed a century ago, and how many people have been wrongfully incarcerated over the years due to marijuana possession prohibitions (MARIJUANA IS NOW LEGAL IN VERMONT AND MANY OTHER STATES)? They just don't work. This flavor ban under discussion will only encourage law-abiding citizens to purchase unregulated and unsafe tobacco products from the black market. Or as we have already seen thanks to the Massachusetts ban, THEY WILL CROSS THE BORDER to buy the products they like!

Our state is still experiencing issues from the floods, and not to mention some of the other problems we have here like homelessness and hardcore drug use. Why on earth would you explore a proposal that would fuel the growth of a Vermont black market and put adult tobacco users at harm by taking away their access to regulated products?

Please be rational and oppose this flavor ban. It hurts everyone: small businesses, our government, and customers.

Sincerely,

Raghu Acharya
Zero Point Market