



American Heart Association.



DATE: February 6, 2025

TO: Rep. Susan R. Donovan, Chair
Rep. Joshua J. Giraldo, First Vice Chair
Rep. Brandon C. Potter, Second Vice Chair
& the Honorable Members of the House Committee on Health & Human Services

FROM: American Heart Association, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network,
American Lung Association, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

SUBJECT: Concerns with House Bill 5027

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 5027 by Rep. Grace Diaz. **Our organizations appreciate the intent of this legislation – however, we find it unnecessary because the current definition of “smoking” in the *Public Health and Workplace Safety Act* is comprehensive and inclusive of all substances.** House Bill 5027 could lead to confusion and undermine existing statute. The definition in current statute is more expansive and should remain intact.

Public Health and Workplace Safety Act:

§23-20.10-2. Definitions.

(19) "Smoking" or "smoke" means inhaling, exhaling, burning, or carrying any lighted or heated cigar, cigarette, pipe, **weed, plant**, other tobacco product or **plant product**, or other combustible substance in any manner or in any form intended for inhalation in any manner or form. "Smoking" or "smoke" also includes the use of electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes, electronic nicotine delivery system products, or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization; provided, however, that smoking shall not include burning during a religious ceremony.

Again, we appreciate Rep. Diaz’s leadership and efforts to protect Rhode Islanders from the harms of secondhand smoke and vapor. We assert that these protections already exist in the *Public Health and Workplace Safety Act* and urge the committee to hold this bill indefinitely. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Megan Tucker
Government Relations Director/Senior Region
Lead
American Heart Association
megan.tucker@heart.org

Ryan Timothy Strik
Government Relations Director, RI
American Cancer Society Cancer Action
Network (ACS CAN)
ryan.strik@cancer.org

Daniel Fitzgerald, MPH, ICPS
Director of Advocacy, RI & MA
American Lung Association
daniel.fitzgerald@lung.org

Kevin O’Flaherty
Director of Advocacy, Northeast Region
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
koflaherty@tobaccofreekids.org