

Lisa Cataldi

From: Macfood store & vape <macfoodstore@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 29, 2021 12:32 PM
To: House Health and Human Services Committee
Subject: Strongly Against - H. 6396
Attachments: H.6396.docx

Dear House Health and Human Services Committee Members/Legislatures.

I hope and pray you are doing well and making a difference to create jobs and help small businesses to grow and make our state of Rhode Island a great state to do business and to live. My name is Mac Babar and I have two locations in Cranston and Warwick. Please know I am strongly against the **H.6396** (Tobacco Flavor Ban).

Please know the Biden campaign was to shore up the middle class where small business is the backbone for our country. **H.6396** only goes against the president's campaign agenda. I personally feel someone is doing these things out of boredom and without realizing this will destroy small businesses like me and create unemployment and make Rhode Island the worst/failed state to do business. Perhaps you may already know that Rhode Island comes to the bottom to start business. **H.6396** will create another flow of black market. We should also learn from our neighboring state where the ban did not help them at all and created a black market like Rhode Island and also lost a big revenue stream. Flavored tobacco bans don't work and push businesses to other states like NH and CT etc.

Please know we are at the forefront to protect our kids and youth out of reach from tobacco by checking ID's, face to face. It has been well documented that the federal government is taking action on vape and flavored tobacco. So please let the agency with the most resources do their science-based work. This is not a policy that should be made by states. The Massachusetts ban has failed and Rhode Island would be wise not to follow.

We pay taxes and create jobs and in essence help our communities and protect our youth and kids from underage smoking by checking IDs etc. Why not create a bill to help and shore up the small businesses which are the backbone of our state and our country by providing funding for more technological tools to strengthen the common-sense law of 21 plus age. As a small business owner and integral part of the community where I care for youths and kids. I am in the process of getting a technology which can scan the ID's to make sure there is no tobacco sold to minors. Banning the flavored tobacco is a grave idea to destroy businesses and create unemployment and many Rhode Island residents will lose their bread and butter.

We have already been experiencing first hand extreme measures it takes to operate in the current environment and also recognize the overwhelming challenges our communities face during these trying times and humbly like you to know that we are an essential business and have played an important role in taking care of our loving community. I humbly request our legislators to focus on more important things during an economic crisis than compounding the economic hardship convenience store operators are currently facing - every day is a test of our ability to stay open and have been working around the clock to stay open. By the grace of God, we will be ok, but only if you don't hurt us while we are down.

I believe more than ever today is the TIME for LAWMAKERS to make the right and logical decisions to help small businesses get back on their feet and shore up the middle class and fulfill President Biden's campaign agenda. This bill H.6396 will do irreversible harm to RI's Small businesses at a time when we are most vulnerable.

I can go on and on but would love to sit together with lawmakers from all parties to make our state a great state to do business and I know I have the ability, knowledge, experience and great zeal.

Sincerely,
Mac Babar

Mac's Food Store
987 Oaklawn Ave
Cranston, RI 02920

Sam's Food Store
651 Main Avenue
Warwick, RI 02886

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