

February 24, 2025

Dear Chair Solomon and Members of the House Corporations Committee,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 5329. This bill proposes allowing vape shops in Rhode Island to sell flavored vapor products while continuing to ban these products in convenience stores. As the owner of a convenience store in Pawtucket, I find this bill to be detrimental to businesses like mine.

This legislation would create an unfair advantage for vape shops by permitting them to sell a wider range of vapor products, while convenience stores would still be restricted. This disparity is unjust, as all businesses, including convenience stores, contribute to the local economy and pay taxes.

If HB 5329 is enacted, it would place my convenience store at a significant disadvantage compared to the vape shop nearby or any other vape shop in the area. It's unfair to impose stricter regulations on me while allowing vape shops to operate under more lenient rules. This creates an uneven playing field and undermines fair competition.

At Sayfs Convenience & Smoke, we take our responsibility to the community seriously. We strictly enforce age verification to prevent minors from purchasing tobacco and vapor products. There is no reason that we should be given an unfair advantage to vape shops.

I urge you to vote against HB 5329 to ensure that all businesses selling vapor products are treated equally.

Thank you,

Zeshan Muhammad

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