

Chris O'Brien

From: Sarah Manuppelli <samanu0201@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 3:30 PM
To: House Finance Committee
Subject: OPPOSE HB7225

To whom it may concern:

My name is Sarah Manuppelli and I am currently employed by Sunshine Vape. I have been employed with this company for 9 years, since 2014, and am the manager. Since then, the company has grown and now has 3 locations in the state of Rhode Island.

With this being said, I am strongly urging you to oppose HB7225. An 80% tax on vape products will force businesses to increase their prices to an unreasonable amount, most likely deterring consumers from purchasing products, therefore putting companies out of business. This would be devastating for not only the small businesses of Rhode Island, but also for the employees of these businesses and their families. I myself have a family and child to support, and bills to pay. Without my job, I would be forced to receive unemployment benefits from the state until I am able to find another job, which is not easy to begin with.

A flavor ban would also harm vape companies just as much as the 80% tax, if not more. I do not understand how it is legal for all of these different alcohol beverage companies to be allowed to have different flavors of alcohol, but when it comes to vaping it is frowned upon. Adults enjoy flavors. Just because something is flavored, does not mean it is marketing towards children. Getting rid of vape flavors would only deter people from looking for a healthier alternative to smoking cigarettes.

I enjoy my job, and I enjoy helping people. I do not want to be forced onto unemployment because of a tax or flavor ban put onto vaping products. This would affect more than just the small businesses of Rhode Island. This would affect the entire state. Consumers will still get their products regardless, whether they have their products shipped, or drive across state lines to another state. All this is going to do, is make the state of Rhode Island lose money, not only from the businesses themselves, but from the hundreds of people who would be forced onto unemployment. So again, I am asking that you please oppose this bill.

Thank you for your time,
Sarah Manuppelli