

4/21/23

Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services,

My name is Scott (Donald Linscott) and I own Maine Pro Photo / Linscott Photography in Westbrook. I'm writing in favor of LD 1215, An Act To End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products.

I believe that ending the sale of flavored tobacco products will help reduce youth tobacco use and promote healthier communities.

It's a fact that the majority of tobacco users start young, and flavored products attract and hook kids into addiction. That harms their own health, drives up medical costs to society and eventually negatively impacts every segment of society including businesses.

I've read that smoking costs Maine nearly \$1.5 billion annually in healthcare expenses and lost productivity. Tobacco use also makes finding healthy and reliable staff that much more challenging.

Having served as a youth worker with ages 11-20 from 1985-2011 I saw children pulled into tobacco use predominantly by peer pressure. Today, I see renewed marketing on the part of tobacco companies aimed at children through the manufacturing and sale of flavored tobacco and new nicotine delivery products that are difficult for parents, teachers, coaches and youth workers to detect (vape.) By the time the habit is detected it is too late and addiction is firmly rooted.

I personally support ending the sale of flavored tobacco products in Maine because there are no positives for our state beyond profit for retailers and tobacco companies. The tax revenue generated does not cover the cost to our health care system and social services.

It's important that we end the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including flavored e-cigarettes, menthol cigarettes, and flavored cigars that appeal to kids.

Please vote "ought to pass" on LD 1215.

Scott Linscott,
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