

Dear Distinguished Members of the Standing Health and Human Services Committee,

Please vote yes on LD 1215 in support of Ending the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products in Maine to protect our youth. Additional information on why I support a vote to ban flavored tobacco can be found below:

Thank you for your consideration.

Sheila Nappi  
Bow Street Market  
Freeport, Maine  
(207)865-6631

My business is a small business. Like many small businesses, we are rooted in community. We are invested in their health and safety and supportive of the locals because without them, we couldn't do what we do.

This is why Bow Street Market in Freeport operates the way that it does. Our team is committed to making a positive impact on the health, safety, and environment in the communities that we serve. In the Spring of 2014 we received [Manomet](#) Grocery Stewardship Certification, and we were recognized by the Freeport Chamber of Commerce for our sustainability practices. We also encourage and promote local farmers, fishermen, bakers, restaurants, and food producers. We use over 200 local vendors, making more than 500 local products available in our store.

One thing we don't offer at Bow Street Market is tobacco products.

In 2014, we made the decision to stop selling tobacco products and we never looked back. While there was a little bit of resistance initially from long time patrons, it died down quickly. As a company, the decision to stop tobacco sales allowed us to clearly define our mission and strategy as a local community focused market. Many have been appreciative that we are taking steps to look out for our friends, neighbors, customers, and community.

The decision to stop carrying tobacco products was mostly for health reasons. At the time, it seemed like the tobacco companies were flailing, trying to attract the younger generation. Unfortunately, they keep coming up with newer and more egregious flavors to addict our youth to tobacco products.

Flavors like Peppermint Mocha, Cherry Crush, and Banana Blast are being used by e-cigarette companies to hook younger people on this dangerous and addictive product.

Tobacco companies did their best to convince us that these products weren't dangerous, but we later found that not to be true. Juul, for example, is high-tech, it's extra enticing for kids. That, combined with the colorful packaging and younger-leaning flavors means one thing: tobacco companies have found another recipe that works to hook kids.

That's simply not okay.

We operate another store in Portland. We took great interest in the Portland City Council voting to end the sale of flavored tobacco products in the city by a vote of 9-0. And based on the comments ahead of the vote, they did it for all the right reasons.

Bangor, Bar Harbor, Brunswick, Portland, and South Portland, have voted to set the right example, please vote "yes" to move forward, and enact this policy statewide. According to news accounts, about two-thirds of likely voters in Maine support making this a law throughout the state, so why not?

Our kids have their entire lives ahead of them to learn, grow and contribute to society. It's our responsibility not only to set the right example for them in doing the right thing, but also to give them the greatest opportunity for success. I am asking you to do the right thing by voting yes to end the sale of flavored tobacco products in Maine.

Maine's motto is Dirigo, which means "We lead." Let's lead on this and end the sale of flavored tobacco products.

Thank you.