

Ritchie Curtis
Mechanic Falls

Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

Sam's Smoke and Novelties is a small business located on Pigeon Hill Road in Mechanic Falls, Maine. Like all of my colleagues, I am extremely concerned about LD 1550. A ban on menthol cigarettes would be terrible for our business. Menthol is a market driver and a substantial source of revenue for our store. I am concerned that if a ban is passed, our business will be in jeopardy.

Massachusetts is losing \$10 million a month in tobacco tax stamp revenue after banning the sale of flavored nicotine products. What's worse, that money is going directly into the pockets of Massachusetts' neighbors. New Hampshire and Rhode Island have reaped 80 percent of Massachusetts' lost revenue from tobacco sales.

I'd like to remind you that out-of-state consumers have generated increased tax revenue for Maine over the years. When customers come to our state to purchase tobacco, they also shop at other retail stores. Like Massachusetts, we will lose an extraordinary amount of business to neighboring states if you implement this mandate.

My coworkers and I are all watching what you do in Augusta. We sincerely hope that you will stand up for our jobs and vote against LD 1550. Our jobs depend on it.

Thank you,

Ritchie Curtis
Sam's Smoke and Novelties
2 Pigeon Hill Road
Mechanic Falls, ME 04256