

LD 1550: An Act To End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products o
Testimony of Tim Farar, Maine Association of Health Physical Education Recreation and Dance
May 7, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services: my name is Tim Farrar, I live in Gray, and I am here today to testify in favor of LD 1550, An Act To End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products. I am a veteran Physical Education Teacher and basketball coach at Lewiston High School as well as the President Elect of Mahperd, which is the organization that represents over 500 of Maine's Health, PE and Wellness Teachers.

In recent years I have seen a rise in the use of vaping products in our schools by our students. Our school weekly confiscates devices and has had to adjust how our bathrooms are set up to help combat this issue. Vaping devices are being used by over a quarter of our school's population based on recent surveys. In my experience this cuts across the socioeconomic divisions, with every segment of our population using. Athletes who I come into contact with directly have even come under influence of these addictive and destructive devices. Some are so addicted they can't quit, even if it means being removed from a team.

As a parent of two middle school aged daughters I see these devices for the alluring products they are. So covert that they can hide in plain sight and deliver their addictive poison in flavors that you would think only came from Willy Wonka's factory. Gummi Bear, Blue Raze Cotton Candy and Banana Nut Blend to name a few. It is no doubt who these companies are targeting.

Decades ago, we as a society made decisions to get tobacco products out of lives and make them socially unacceptable in public places. But these companies have found another way in, and they are going after the most vulnerable in society, our children.

I believe that Maine's future deserves action on this bill that puts an end to flavors in vaping products. It is time to end the sale of flavored tobacco in Maine.
Please Vote Yes on LD 1550

Sincerely
Tim Farrar
Gray Maine
Mahperd President Elect

Tim Farrar
Gray

Please see attached PDF