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May 7, 2021

Hon. Ned Claxton, Senate Chair
Hon. Michele Meyer, House Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Cross Building, Room 209
Augusta, Maine 04333

RE: LD 1550, An Act To End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products

Greetings Senator Claxton and Representative Meyer:

I am writing to express my support for LD 1550.

We have long been aware that tobacco companies targeted their advertising to attract young people. One of their tactics was to flavor cigarettes with fruit and candy flavors. Consequently, certain flavored cigarettes were prohibited on September 22, 2009, as part of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act. Unfortunately, this prohibition did not apply to other tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and cigars, which come in flavors with obvious youth appeal such as cotton candy and fruit punch. This bill closes the loopholes that allow the sale of flavored cigars and e-cigarettes. This is very important because research shows that flavored products are not only popular among youth but may lead to cigarette smoking.

Furthermore, unlike cigarette and smokeless tobacco companies, e-cigarette companies are not required to report their marketing and promotional expenditures to the Federal Trade Commission, so it is difficult for us to know how much of their marketing budgets are spent on youth advertising. We do know that e-cigarette marketing reaches and appeals to youth. For this reason, I urge passage of LD 1550 to prevent youth smoking.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aaron M. Frey".

Aaron M. Frey
Attorney General