

Martin Koontz
Portland

Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

Here in Maine, those of us in the wholesale and retail industries have a rich history of growing our state's economy. Yet, the latest proposal to ban menthol combined with a proposed tax increase threatens our ability to do so in the future. I therefore write to you out of deep concern as one of the nearly 500,000 Americans whose jobs directly depend on the sale of menthol through existing legal channels.

If the state legislature enacts a ban on menthol, it would create severe problems for my family's economic security, it stops short of actually solving the problem of underage access and initiation to tobacco products. Additionally, a tax increase on cigarettes combined with the possibility of certain products being banned would certainly send many of our customers to New Hampshire. LD 1550 and LD 1423 are going to be an economic stimulus to New Hampshire and crippling to our home state of Maine.

In conclusion, I am asking that you support those of us that depend on the sale of menthol as a way to support our families. Please vote against LD 1550 and LD 1423.

Respectfully,

Martin Koontz