

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

Testimony of Jayden Love, Indian Island, Penobscot Nation

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Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services: my name is Jayden Love, I live on Indian Island, in Penobscot Nation and I am here today to testify in favor of LD 1550, An Act To End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products.

I am Penobscot tribal citizen; I am also a member of the Penobscot Nation Youth Council.

Our Traditional tobacco has been used by Penobscot's and Indigenous people since time immemorial as a medicine with cultural and spiritual importance. But traditional tobacco has been tainted by the tobacco industry. Chemicals poured into the tobacco to make it more addicting and flavorful.

When I entered high school vape products hit the market. It seemed like high schoolers from every school had one in their hands. The bathrooms were called "the vape room" or "the Juul room". More flavors hit the market like mint, cucumber, mango, and many more which made it more appealing to youth. Big tobacco companies target youth with flavors, appealing advertising, fancy packaging and smoke shops look more like candy stores from the outside.

People of color are targeted the most when it comes to commercial tobacco products. Native Americans are more likely to smoke cigarettes or vape and become addicted. Our medicine has been turned into poison by the commercial tobacco industry. They are killing people and it needs to stop.

Maine's future depends on healthy kids, but flavored tobacco products are luring and hooking another generation. It's time to end the sale of flavored tobacco. Please vote 'yes' on LD 1550."