

Nancie Sparaco
Standish

Dear Members of the Health & Human Services Committee:

My name is Nancie Sparaco. I am a resident of Standish and support LD 1550, "An Act to End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products."

I started smoking when I was 14. I picked Virginia Slims because of the advertising and I wanted to look cool. Teens today are no different. The tobacco industry knows that - and in manufacturing and marketing e-cigarettes, they are targeting these kids. With more than 15,000 flavors on the market, devices that look like USB drives, and even hooded sweatshirts with e-cigarettes, the industry is leveraging their rebellious age to get them addicted to their products. The added rush of knowing their parents may not recognize the e-cigarette, or that they sneak in a puff while in class, makes it more likely they will try and continue to use these products.

I stopped smoking when I was 27. My niece, at the time 3 years old, imitated me by using a pencil to pretend she was smoking. I wanted to be a role model for her and I quit that day, cold turkey. It was not easy, and it bothers me to know that we now have a youth vaping epidemic.

Please pass this legislation. Thank you.