

Alpesh Patel
Westbrook, Pownal, Canaan, ME
LD 1693
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Dear Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Alpesh Patel and I writing to you as a resident and small business operator across 3 communities in Maine. My businesses employ over 25 Maine residents. I am disappointed to hear that the Maine State Legislature is considering a tobacco tax increase in addition to a ban on menthol cigarettes, flavored dip, and flavored cigars across the state. I urge you to oppose this measure.

The current state of the convenience store business is not a positive one. Between facing worker shortages, increased wages, a declining economy...every day is a battle to stay open. My Westbrook location is the largest tobacco retailer in the state. The success of my Westbrook location has allowed me to invest in my two new businesses. Since purchasing those locations, I have invested not only in the property, but the employees. I was able to increase wages of loyal employees and have plans to upgrade both locations that will greatly impact these communities in a positive way. If LD1693 passes, I stand to lose over 1 million dollars in revenue from just the flavor ban alone. An additional tax increase would only compound this loss. If you pass this bill, people like me will not be able to financially invest in our local communities. We will not be able to raise wages, and the only people who suffer are your constituents.

I ask you to please vote against LD1693 because I believe the state has much more important issues to address than a tax increase and flavored tobacco ban. Over the next 10 years, Maine stands to collect over 1.3 Billion dollars in tax revenue, of which a great portion come from flavored tobacco products.

LD 1693 is a terrible opportunity that will crush Maine small business and create a greater divide between us and the big outside chains.

Please vote against LD 1693

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Alpesh Patel
Friendly Discount Beverage
Short Stop
Canaan Superette
Westbrook, Pownal, Canaan