

I am urging you to vote no on HB 1229 – the “Cigar Bar” Bill. In a time when we have a mental health and addiction crisis, I find it hard to understand why we would promote another addiction – that to nicotine. Nicotine has been found to prime the brain for other addictions.

In my position as a public health nurse, I educate students on the dangers of nicotine/vaping/smoking, etc. Research shows that exposure to nicotine is damaging to the developing brain, leading to problems with learning, memory, and mood to name a few. Last year, I had a third-grade girl tell me that she tried a vape and liked it. Students as young as 4th grade admit that they are being offered vapes. Plus, these same students are aware of kids in their classes who have/are vaping. Any bill that promotes nicotine use sends a message to kids that nicotine use is okay.

Lastly, ten years ago, the citizens of North Dakota made their decision on a strong smoke free law. This law protects all workers from secondhand smoke. I feel most people of North Dakota would be surprised to learn that their legislators are looking to change that protection and their decision.

Thank you for your consideration of my request and your service to North Dakota.

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