

Chairman and members of the Committee. I thank you for taking the time to read this and for your consideration on this Bill. My name is Darius Endres. I am the owner of Sports Vape in Fargo. I am hear to sincerely ask you to not recommend passing Senate Bill 2281. I have 1 store with a total of 8 employees. For the last 11 years I have had a store in Fargo. It gets tougher and tougher every year to run a small business. The cost of inventory, insurance, rent, and competitive liveable wages for employees continues to sky rocket. Yet, we continue to maintain, pay our taxes, and run our business to the best of our ability with what we have to work with. This bill in front of you will be a killer for every small business like mine. Our inventory prices will increase and we will lose thousands of customers due to the high costs of our products. It will eventually lead to employee lay offs and even potentially closing down my business. The products that I sell in my store are a much safer alternative to tobacco cigarettes and more affordable. If Senate Bill 2281 gets passed, the affordable prices no longer exist and people will resort back to tobacco cigarettes. Currently, tobacco cigarette usage are at all time lows and the best way to keep it that way would be to continue offering these safer alternative products to our customers at an affordable price. If not, this Bill will also create a black market here in North Dakota. Consumers will start to make their own products and sell them on the streets, and could cause serious health risks to these consumers. A thriving underground market in tobacco products would be a serious threat to effective regulation and public health. Here at Sports Vape, my staff have become like a family to me. My staff puts their trust in me to keep their paychecks coming so that they and myself can provide for our families. One of the greatest things about having a small business in North Dakota is the business friendly environment and nature, including low taxes, incentives for small businesses, and the attractiveness for entrepreneurs to pursue a business with limited financial burdens. Customers at my store are already paying a sales tax. My business is already paying payroll taxes, state tax, federal tax, and income tax. This Bill is just another tax being passed down to the everyday consumer who is already being hammered with enough taxes and very high costs of living. Please don't add anymore taxes to my business or my consumers. Please say no to Senate Bill 2281. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Darius Endres

218-979-1339

sportsvapefargo@gmail.com