



January 24, 2021

Testimony of Laura Hale
American Heart Association

Oppose SB 273 Electronic Smoking Device Regulation Act of 2021

Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Honorable Members of the Finance Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today. My name is Laura Hale and I am the Director of Government Relations for the American Heart Association. The American Heart Association asks for an unfavorable report on SB 273.

We have been a vocal proponent of flavored tobacco regulation for some time. Although we appreciate the intention of the bill and the dedication of its sponsor, SB 273 has too many key weaknesses for us to be able to support it. First, it invents categories for different flavored tobacco products. All tobacco is addictive, and all flavored tobacco is appealing to youth. It doesn't matter if the flavored tobacco is in a pod, a refillable product, or a cigarette, these products are addictive and targeted to kids. By removing only one product from the market, young flavored tobacco users will easily switch products. Youth will have no qualms about using one product instead of another. We're already seeing the dominance of Juul fading and other refillable products to becoming more popular.

Second, SB 273 uses imprecise language in key sections. It is unclear where ESDs could be consumed, and the legislative language could be interpreted to allow vaping bars. Inhaling a tobacco product is dangerous and we cannot have confusion about the Clean Indoor Air Act inserted into the state code.

The American Heart Association urges an unfavorable report on SB 273.