



WMDA/CAR Service Station
and Automotive Repair Association

Chair: C.T. Wilson
Members of Economic Matters Committee

RE: HB477 and HB442 - Local Authorization Tobacco Products and Electronic Smoking Devices, and Baltimore City
Position: In Opposition

Giving 24 counties and 157 municipalities the authority to change tobacco, OTP and ESD laws would create a hodgepodge of regulations that would be confusing to retailers, enforcement and to adult users. What it would accomplish is sending legal buying age resident to a different retailer, at best within the state and at worst to our boarding states or street sellers that collect no Maryland tax.

In a municipality or county that banned a product or all tobacco products and ESD, with no legal retailers close or they are transportation restricted will turn to street sales of illegal tobacco or ESD products. Illegal market sales are an ongoing business now. Banning a product would bring about two things – expanding criminal activity within the area and exposing more location for those age restricted to buy product. HB477 and HB442 would promote crime by legislation!

Retailers have enough regulations to think about while keeping their customer and employees safe. Expenses are up and customers traffic is down. Taking away a product they sell and sending buyer to another location to purchase legally or illegal will hurt retailers, Maryland residents and promote crime while achieving nothing. You can not legislate behavior, use tax generated by these products to institute educational programs starting in elementary age. This will do more than any isolation legislation that has so many negative impacts.

Turning Marylanders into scavenger hunters for legal product and criminals for buying illegal product on the street should not be an option. Leave tobacco, OTP and ESD regulations in your domain.

Please give HB477 and HB442 an unfavorable Report

WMDA/CAR is a trade association that has represented service stations, convenience stores and repair shops since 1937. Any questions can be addressed to Kirk McCauley, 301-775-0221 or kmccauley@wmda.net