

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2008

Wednesday, February 13, 2008
1:15 pm

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL NO. 2859-- RELATING TO TOBACCO PRODUCTS

TO THE HONORABLE DAVID IGE, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Bree'Ana Vellalos. I am a home-schooled junior in high school. I support this bill, which would make it illegal for minors to use any form of tobacco products. Tar, hydrogen cyanide, ammonia, carbon monoxide and nicotine, the drug responsible for an addiction that smokers spend years and years trying to break, are just a few things that are found in tobacco. Because of these harmful ingredients, I believe that minors should definitely not be permitted to use tobacco products.

According to quitsmoking.about.com, "every day in the United States alone, approximately 3,000 kids under the age of 18 start smoking. Teen smokers have smaller lungs and weaker hearts than teens who don't smoke. Those who start smoking young are more likely to have a long-term addiction to nicotine than people who start smoking later in life."

Although I do not have any personal experience with tobacco, I have seen teens smoke five to six cigarettes a day. I have also read many facts that prove smoking kills. As teenagers, we do not think about the serious consequences of smoking. Unfortunately, all too often, we want to do what "everybody else" does. We need the help of the legislature to protect us. Fearing the negative consequences outlined in this bill will cause teens to make better choices. The end result: we will have the opportunity to grow up to be much healthier adults.

In closing, I would like to thank this Committee for the opportunity to present testimony on Senate Bill 2859 and pray that it passes.