

HB 273, HD1

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

BRIAN SCHATZ
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION
P.O. BOX 259
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1530
FAX NO: (808) 587-1584

FREDERICK D. PABLO
DIRECTOR OF TAXATION

RANDOLF L. M. BALDEMOR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Comments

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION REGARDING HB 273, HD 1 RELATING TO TOBACCO PRODUCTS

TESTIFIER: **FREDERICK D. PABLO, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION (OR DESIGNEE)**

COMMITTEE: HTH

DATE: MARCH 18, 2011

TIME: 3:00PM

POSITION: NO POSITION

This measure amends the calculation of tobacco tax on "other tobacco products" (*i.e.*, chew, pipe tobacco), from a percentage of the wholesale price per item to the greater of either that percentage or a flat \$3.20 per item (*i.e.*, equal to a pack of cigarettes).

The Department of Taxation (Department) takes no position on this measure. The previous committee implemented the Department's suggested technical amendments. The Department also notes that the \$3.20 amount applies to each item or article. The terms "item" and "article" should be defined in the statute to prevent taxpayers from bundling items to avoid the tax.

The Department points out that taxing items at a percentage of cost is a very efficient means of taxation because it locks in increased tax revenue derived from increases in value. For example, the cigarette tax is 16 cents per cigarette no matter how expensive the cigarette is. This method is inefficient in the sense that increases in the cigarette cost do not generate added revenue. By taxing a percentage of value, the tax on other tobacco products captures the inflationary impacts of price increases over time, resulting in increased revenue.



March 15, 2011

TO: Senator Josh Green, M.D. Chair, Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Health
FROM: Jackie Berry, Executive Director
RE: **HB273,HD1**
Hearing: Friday, March 18, 2011 at 3:00pm

Honorable Chairperson Green, Vice Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee

HMHB is a statewide coalition of public and private agencies and individuals committed to the improvement of maternal and infant health status in Hawaii through education, coordination and advocacy. **HMHB is testifying today in support of SB 273 Relating to Tobacco Products.** This bill would impose an excise tax on tobacco products other than cigarettes that is equivalent to the tax imposed on a standard package of twenty cigarettes or little cigars. Tax increases will not only bring in additional revenue, they will reduce tobacco use, particularly among our young people. Youth are two to three times more sensitive to tobacco price changes than adults. Chew, as well as new and emerging products are being marketed to you, and, it is working – rates of smokeless tobacco use among high school students rose from 2.8% to 3.7% between 2003 and 2007.

HMHB is particularly concerned about tobacco use by young women. Research indicates the importance of healthy behaviors prior to pregnancy have on birth outcomes. What women do prior to pregnancy will affect their babies. Healthy Women have Healthy Babies, and healthy women do not use tobacco products.

We urge you support of this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration of this bill and our testimony.

845 22nd Avenue, Honolulu, Hawaii 96816
Phone # (808) 737-5805

E-mail: jackieb@hmhb-hawaii.org website: www.hmhb-hawaii.org

March 17, 2011

TO: Chair Josh Green and Members of the Senate Committee on Health

FROM: Cigar Association of America, Inc.
(William Goo)

RE: HB 273, HD 1 Relating to Tobacco Products
Hearing Date: March 18, 2011 at 3:00 p.m.

My name is William Goo. I represent the Cigar Association of America, Inc. (CAA).

CAA opposes the passage of HB 273, HD 1 for the reasons set forth below:

In 2009, the tax on pipe tobacco as well as all other tobacco products was substantially increased as a result of the SCHIP legislation. The tax on pipe tobacco increased by 158%.

In 2009, the tax on OTP (products other than cigarettes and cigars) in Hawaii was increased from 40% to 70% of the wholesale price of the product.

Any further increase in the tax on pipe tobacco and other tobacco products would be devastating and not likely to result in any significant increase in tax revenue. In fact, it could have the opposite effect and result in a decrease in sales.

It is respectfully requested that the Committee hold this measure.

Thank you for considering this testimony.



American Heart Association® | American Stroke Association®

Learn and Live.

Serving Hawaii

Testimony **SUPPORTING INTENT** of HB 273, HD1 “Relating To Tobacco”

The American Heart Association supports the intent of HB 273, HD1 but recommends an amendment to the bill.

A portion of new funds realized from any tobacco tax increase should be directed toward further tobacco prevention and education. Hawaii current investment remains well below the Centers for Disease Control’s recommended spending in tobacco and prevention. The CDC recommends that Hawaii invest \$15.2 million per year on tobacco prevention, education and cessation programs to fully achieve success in reducing tobacco dependence. Last year the state invested only approximately \$8 million toward that end.

The state should attempt to set the tax on “other tobacco” products at a level comparable to its cigarette tax. In the future, any cigarette tax increases should be accompanied by a comparable increase in the tax on other tobacco products to insure that hikes in cost for one type of tobacco product don’t drive potential young customers toward the cheaper type of tobacco. The goal of any tobacco tax increase should be primarily to achieve a reduction in use of tobacco products, especially by price-sensitive young people. The costs to the state for medical care alone related to tobacco use far outweigh the benefits in taxes collected on tobacco sales.

What do nicotine and tobacco smoke do to the body?

Nicotine causes a short-term increase in blood pressure, heart rate and the flow of blood from the heart. It also causes the arteries to narrow. Users of smokeless tobacco are exposed to levels of nicotine that are comparable to cigarette smokers. In addition, smoke from other tobacco products like “little cigars” or roll-your-own tobacco include carbon monoxide, which reduces the amount of oxygen the blood can carry. This, combined with the nicotine effects, creates an imbalance between the demand for oxygen by the cells and the amount of oxygen the blood can supply. Tobacco smoke also increases the risk of developing hardening of the arteries and heart attacks in several ways. First, carbon monoxide damages the inner walls of the arteries, encouraging fatty buildups in them. Over time, this causes the vessels to narrow and harden. Nicotine may also contribute to this process. Smoking also causes several changes in the blood that make clots—and heart attack—more likely. Cigar and pipe smoking increases the risk of abdominal aortic aneurysm by as much as six times compared to never-smokers. Smoking cigars or pipes doubles the risk of fatal stroke compared to never-smokers. Smoking cigars or pipes and cigarettes increases the risk for fatal stroke by six times compared to never-smokers. Pipe smoking has been found to increase coronary heart disease risk by almost as much as cigarette smoking.

The AHA released a policy statement on the impact of smokeless tobacco products on cardiovascular disease in September 2010. Based on a review of existing studies done to date, that statement concluded that smokeless tobacco should not be recommended as an alternative to cigarette smoking or as a smoking cessation product. There is evidence that long-term smokeless tobacco product use may be associated with a greater risk of fatal heart attack and fatal stroke, and suggesting that smokeless tobacco product use may complicate or reduce the chance for survival after a heart attack or stroke. In addition to potential cardiovascular disease risk, smokeless tobacco product use is associated with an increased risk of some cancers and with oral disease, and it is addictive. Furthermore, the promotion of smokeless tobacco may lead to fewer people quitting smoking and more dual use of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products. It stated that clinicians should continue to discourage use of all tobacco products and emphasize the prevention of smoking initiation and smoking cessation as the primary goals for tobacco control.

Serving Hawaii since 1948

For information on the AHA’s educational or research programs, contact your nearest AHA office, or visit our web site at www.americanheart.org or e-mail us at hawaii@heart.org

Oahu:
677 Ala Moana Blvd., Ste. 600
Honolulu, HI 96813-5485
Phone: 808-538-7021
Fax: 808-538-3443

Maui County:
J. Walter Cameron Center
95 Mahalani Street, No. 13
Wailuku, HI 96793-2598
Phone: 808-224-7185
Fax: 808-224-7220

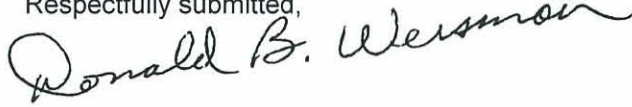
Hawaii:
400 Hualani Street, Ste. 15
Hilo, HI 96720-4333
Phone: 808-961-2825
Fax: 808-961-2827

Kauai:
(Served by Oahu office)
Phone: 808-538-7021
Fax: 808-538-3443

*“Building healthier lives,
free of cardiovascular
diseases and stroke.”*

It is important to both maintain a balance between the taxes on cigarettes and the tax on "other tobacco" products in order to continue to drive down Hawaii's youth smoking rates. It is just as important to maintain the level of investment in tobacco prevention, education and cessation programs at or near the CDC's minimum recommended amounts. The AHA strongly recommends that a portion of any new tobacco tax revenue be earmarked to support those life-saving programs.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald B. Weisman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the name.

Donald B. Weisman
Hawaii Government Relations Director



March 17, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair of Health Committee
Senator Clarence Nishihara, Vice-Chair of Health Committee
Members, Senate Health Committee

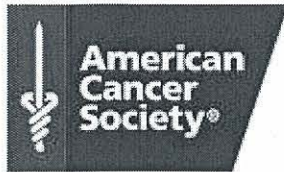
Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
FIN Cmte; March 18, 2011 at 3:00 p.m.; Rm 229

My name is Valerie Chang. I am Executive Director of the Hawaii COPD Coalition. Our organization provides services and support and improves treatment for Hawaii's people affected by Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), more commonly known as emphysema, chronic bronchitis and similar conditions. COPD and other respiratory conditions are the third leading cause of death in the US. Our 2007 and 2008 survey data reveal **22,000 to 30,800 of Hawaii adults (2.2-3.2%) have been told they have COPD, emphysema and/or chronic bronchitis.** It is estimated that at least another 22,000 to 30,800 Hawaii adults remain undiagnosed while suffering from COPD. **COPD is responsible for \$55.9 million in emergency and hospital charges in 2008.** Tobacco smoking is the major cause of these health conditions. For more information and Hawaii Department of Health's Burden of COPD in Hawaii 2010 Report to go <http://hawaiicopd.org>.

The Hawaii COPD Coalition strongly *supports* HB273, HD1 raising taxes on other tobacco products. The tax increase will bring in greatly needed revenue and reduce tobacco use, particularly in our youth who are especially sensitive to price. These funds can help increase tobacco prevention and cessation efforts, since so many want to quit and need services to help them. Youth use of smokeless products is rising in both high and middle school students. Many dangerous health conditions are caused by smokeless tobacco, including cancers, gum disease and increased cardiovascular conditions. Rates must be increased to keep prices comparable to cigarettes and ensure declines in use.

Tobacco causes so many health, social and financial problems in addition to COPD. Please vote in favor of HB273, HD1. Thank you for carefully considering this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any additional information.

Aloha,
Valerie Chang, JD
Executive Director
Hawaii COPD Coalition
Website: <http://hawaiicopd.org>,
e-mail: copd.hawaii@yahoo.com
(808)699-9839
733 Bishop Street, Suite 1550
Honolulu, HI 96813



March 16, 2011

Committee on Health
Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

Hearing:

3:00 p.m., Friday, March 18, 2011
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 229

RE: HB 273, HD1, Relating to Tobacco Products

Testimony in Strong Support

Chair Green, Vice Chair Nishihara and members of the Committee on Health, on behalf of the American Cancer Society Hawaii Pacific Inc., thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 273, HD1 which would impose an excise tax on tobacco products other than large cigars that is equal to the greater of 70% of the wholesale price, of \$3.20 for, each article or item of tobacco products.

For over 60 years, the American Cancer Society in Hawaii has been dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem through research, prevention activities, early detection, new and innovative treatment, and advocacy, which includes strongly supporting tobacco tax initiatives.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) was an early promulgator of the link between smoking and cancer in the landmark epidemiological studies of 1952 and 1959. In 1962, the ACS Board of Directors, having reviewed scientific studies on the relationship between cigarette smoking and lung cancer, publicly declared that "the clinical, epidemiological, experimental, chemical and pathological evidence presented by the many studies reported in recent years indicates beyond reasonable doubt that cigarette smoking is the major cause of the unprecedented increase in lung cancer."

In looking for ways to reduce smoking and tobacco use, ACS concluded that raising the tax on cigarettes and other tobacco products would be an effective way to reduce their use; thus, in turn reducing the incidents of various types of cancers including, lung, pharyngeal, and oral cancer.

In 2009, due to concerns of the legislature in the increase use of smokeless tobacco products, the tax on these products was raised from 40% to 70% of the wholesale price; generating an additional \$500,000 in tax revenues; from \$3.03 million in 2008 to \$3.53 million in 2010. Despite this increase, there are indications that the use of smokeless tobacco products is trending upwards.

We note for the committee, that in 2007, the President's Cancer Panel issued its report, *Promoting Healthy Lifestyles*, which advised increasing state tobacco taxes; stating, **"Increases in tobacco excise taxes which are passed along to consumers in the form of higher tobacco product prices have proven highly effective in reducing tobacco use by promoting cessation among current users, discouraging relapse among former users, preventing initiation among potential users, and reducing consumption among those who continue to use tobacco. These revenues also provide crucial dollars needed to fund anti-tobacco efforts."**

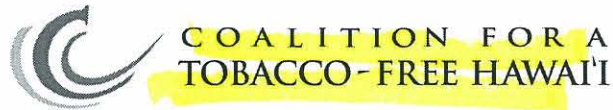
In moving this measure forward, we ask the committee to also consider the President's Cancer Panel's recommendation to fund anti-tobacco efforts and amend this bill by including a provision that would allocate a certain percentage of the new revenues directly to the Hawaii Tobacco Control Trust Fund which is administered by the Hawaii Community Foundation. This will ensure that community based organizations throughout the state would be able to maintain or even increase tobacco prevention and cessation services.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony in strong support of HB273, HD1.

Very truly yours,



George S. Massengale, JD
Director of Government Relations



To: The Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Chair
The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health
From: Trisha Y. Nakamura, Esq. Policy and Advocacy Director
Hrg: HTH Cmte; March 18, 2011 at 3:00 p.m.; Rm 229
Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD 1 Relating to Tobacco Products**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of HB 273, HD 1 which provides for parity between taxes on cigarettes and most other tobacco products. In addition, we offer some recommendations that we feel will help further carry out the intent of this measure: increased health of Hawaii's people and tax parity between cigarettes and other tobacco products. These recommendations are captured in SB 233, SD 2.

The Coalition for a Tobacco Free Hawaii (Coalition) is the only independent organization in Hawaii whose sole mission is to reduce tobacco use through education, policy and advocacy. The Coalition provides leadership for the tobacco control community, develops networks, helps coordinate tobacco control programs and builds community awareness.

Health is Promoted By Increasing the Tax on Tobacco Products Other Than Cigarettes

By increasing the cost of each tobacco product sold, use of smokeless tobacco by adults and young people will decrease. This will result in a decline in the serious health conditions that arise from use of smokeless tobacco including cancer of the esophagus pharynx, larynx, stomach, and pancreas, gum disease, and the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Adolescents and young adults are two to three times more sensitive to tobacco price changes than adults—less youth will begin to start using smokeless tobacco and more will reduce their consumption. Hawaii has seen youth use of smokeless tobacco fluctuate despite our decreasing smoking rates. This is a concern: children and adolescents who use smokeless tobacco, especially if they are male, are at an increased risk to become cigarette smokers.

Parity in Taxes on Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Is Imperative and Supported by Hawaii Residents

The Coalition supports efforts to set the tax on other tobacco products comparable to the tax on cigarettes. With the increase proposed in HB 273, HD 1 consumers will not be able to switch from one form of tobacco to another. This measure will ensure most other tobacco products are not more "price-friendly" than cigarettes. More consumers are more likely to quit.



COALITION FOR A
TOBACCO-FREE HAWAII

According to a recent poll of Hawaii residents, more than three-quarters support taxing other tobacco products at the same level as cigarettes.

A Portion of the Revenues Must Be Earmarked for Tobacco Prevention and Treatment

Hawaii residents overwhelmingly agree (89 percent) that it's important for the state to earmark some of the revenue to fund tobacco prevention and quit smoking programs. When the price of tobacco increases, more seek help to quit. It's necessary we have community resources including the Quitline, the American Lung Association, and services at community health centers to help tobacco users address their nicotine addiction.

We strongly support this measure and urge you to dedicate a portion of the revenue to programs that help tobacco users quit. We also urge you to maintain existing funding for tobacco prevention and quit smoking programs to meet the demand.

The Coalition Recommends Language to Ensure Tax Parity and Health Benefits in the Future

The Coalition urges the Legislature to consider adding in language that would result in the continued parity between the taxes on tobacco products and cigarettes. When the tax on cigarette increases, the tax on other tobacco products would also increase. In addition, more parity is created when products are sold in larger quantities, rather than in single or small amounts.

Here is the draft language :

Section 7. Chapter 245 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes, section 245-3, is hereby amended by adding new subsection (14) as follows:

(14) An excise tax equal to ninety per cent of the wholesale price of each article or item of tobacco products, other than cigars, and equal to fifty percent of the wholesale price for large cigars sold by the wholesaler or dealer on and after July 1, 2011, whether or not sold at wholesale, or if not sold then at the same rate upon the use by the wholesaler or dealer, except that:

(a) for large cigars there shall be a minimum tax rate equal to the amount of the total tax on a pack of 20 cigarettes established by this chapter per package of five cigars, with a proportionate tax for any package or quantity of cigars consisting of fewer or more than five cigars, and no cigars with a wholesale price of less than \$1.00 per cigar shall be sold in packages of fewer than five;



(b) for any tobacco product other than cigarettes or cigars that is offered in discrete single-use lozenges, pouches, pills, capsules or other single-dose or single-use units, or in packages of such single-use units, there shall be a minimum tax equal to the amount of the total tax per-cigarette established by this chapter per each single-use unit, and all such tobacco products shall be sold in packages containing at least twenty individual single-use units;

(c) for any smokeless tobacco product that consists of loose tobacco or that is otherwise not subject to paragraph (b), there shall be a minimum tax equal to the amount of the total tax on a pack of 20 cigarettes established by this chapter per 1.2 ounces, with a proportionate tax on any weights of fewer or more than 1.2 ounces, based on the net weight as provided in good faith by the manufacturer, and all such tobacco products shall be sold in packages containing at least one ounce;

(d) for roll-your-own tobacco and any other loose tobacco meant for smoking, there shall be a minimum tax equal to the amount of the total tax on a pack of 20 cigarettes established by this chapter per 0.65 ounces with a proportionate tax on any other weights, based on the net weight as provided in good faith by the manufacturer, and all such tobacco products shall be sold in packages containing at least 0.65 ounces; and

(e) for any other tobacco product, there shall be a minimum tax equal to the total tax under this chapter on twenty cigarettes per each package or container that contains any such tobacco product intended or expected for final sale to consumers, with the tax applied to the smallest package or container in any package or container intended or expected for sale to consumers that contains multiple smaller packages or containers.

The Coalition requests your consideration of the language proposed and your support of creating parity between other tobacco products and cigarettes. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of this measure.

TAXBILLSERVICE

126 Queen Street, Suite 304

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: TOBACCO, Tax on other tobacco products

BILL NUMBER: HB 273, HD-1

INTRODUCED BY: House Committee on Finance

BRIEF SUMMARY: Amends HRS section 245-3 to provide that the tax on tobacco products other than large cigars shall be the greater of 70% of its wholesale price or \$3.20, effective July 1, 2011.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2030

STAFF COMMENTS: The proposed measure provides that the tax on tobacco products other than large cigars shall be the greater of 70% of its wholesale price or \$3.20. It should be noted that when Act 58, SLH 2009, was approved by the legislature, it changed the way other tobacco products are taxed and increased the rate of the ad valorem tax on other tobacco products other than cigars to 70% of the wholesale value and imposed an ad valorem tax equal to 50% of the wholesale value on cigars that had a "ring gauge" of more than 30 (approximately a half inch circumference). In the latter case, those cigars of less than that ring gauge, known as "little cigars," were thrown into the same rate schedule as cigarettes.

However, this proposal highlights one of the distortions that occurs when product price increases and consumption either decreases, or in the case where the tax is based on the cost or value of the product, tax collections will be adversely affected. Until 1993 all tobacco products were taxed at a rate of 40% of the wholesale value of the product plus the 0.5% general excise tax rate and, of course, the 4% general excise tax at retail. When the tax on cigarettes was converted to a per unit basis in 1993, it put all cigarettes, regardless of value, on parity. So inexpensive product was taxed at the same rate as more expensive product even though the difference in cost may have been attributed only to the cost of marketing and advertising the more costly product. As lawmakers increased the tax per pack over the years and the cost of making the product also increased the retail price, smokers had three choices, either pay more for their preferred brand, quit smoking, or trade down to a less costly product. While quitting smoking will definitely spell a loss in tax revenues for the state, trading down to a less costly brand will not.

This is an important point to note with respect to all other tobacco products, lawmakers should consider restructuring the way other tobacco products are taxed to insure stability in the collections from the sales of these products. Instead of continuing to set the tax as a percent of the wholesale value, consideration should be given to moving to a per unit approach like the taxing of cigarettes. If the tax was based on the weight of the product, the larger the package of tobacco products, be it chewing tobacco or pipe tobacco, the more the tax would be. Thus, three ounces of pipe tobacco, no matter what the value of the product, would be taxed like another container of three ounces of pipe tobacco. Similarly, cigars that are fatter and, therefore, weigh more than say, cigarillos, which are thinner, would be taxed according to the overall weight of the product. As a result, when the cost of the product rises, and the behavioral reaction

is to trade down to a less costly product sets in, the amount of tax the state receives will be the same, thus stabilizing the collections from this source. Under this proposal, a lesser value product may be taxed at the same absolute dollar amount as a more expensive valued product because of the flat dollar floor of \$3.20 per product. The example would be a tobacco product that has wholesale value of \$2.00 and would be taxed at \$3.20 as \$3.20 is greater than the 70% of wholesale value of \$1.40 while a tobacco product that has a wholesale value of \$4.57 would also be taxed at \$3.20 (70% of \$4.57). While the overall price of the two products would still favor the cheaper product, the amount of tax imposed is inequitable. Therefore, using a unit measurement as opposed to value would insure that two products with the same amount of tobacco quantity by weight would be imposed with the same amount of tax per product.

In making the conversion to so many cents per ounce, lawmakers may want to utilize the current tax collected on the most expensive product and divide that amount by the number of ounces. While this will result in an initial bump in collections as the tax on less costly product will see an increase, it will bring parity to these types of products and stabilize collections as users migrate to less costly brands or products as the cost rises.

Digested 3/16/11

Feleai Tau

From: Hau'oli Tomoso [jtomoso@hnkop.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2011 2:11 PM
To: HTHTestimony
Subject: Testimony on HB 273 HD 1

Aloha Kakou,

I am writing in favor of this bill that will increase the tax on other tobacco products to \$3.20 per unit, thus creating parity between taxes on cigarettes and other tobacco products. As a member of the Health Care Delivery network and system on Maui, I am interested in how this increase "sin taxes" can help fund tobacco cessation and prevention services in our jurisdiction.

Please vote in favor of this bill.

Mahalo a nui

"Loa'a ke ola, halau ola!"

Live. Well.

John A. Hau'oli Tomoso, MSW, ACSW, LSW

Executive Director

Hui No Ke Ola Pono, Inc.

"To improve the health status of all Native Hawaiians by empowering the present and future generations to be their own health advocates."

95 Mahalani Street, Suite 16-A

Wailuku, Maui, Hawai'i 96793-2521

Ke'ena: 808-442-6801

Kelepa'i: 808-442-6884

Leka uila: jtomoso@hnkop.org

cc: STAFFHMKOP, CTFHADMIN, NPACMAUI, Maui County State Legislators

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Jennifer Pescador and I am a registered voter in Hawaii. I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

Other Tobacco Products are a means that tobacco companies use to get around our state laws that restrict smoking in public places. Tobacco companies know that the less places where people can smoke, the less people will actually smoke. But OTPs are typically smokeless and keep our citizens of Hawaii using nicotine. These products are also extremely attractive to youth and can serve as a gateway to nicotine addiction.

If this law is passed we will lessen the chance that our young people in Hawaii will get hooked on tobacco (nicotine) and even help current tobacco users to quit since the high cost of products is a good motivation to quit altogether. Our state will become not only a healthier place for our people but for the generations of the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs)

Jennifer Pescador
The REAL Movement
Registered Voter

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Eric Burgemeister and I am a REAL member. REAL is an anti-tobacco youth group. I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

This law will help protect youth from getting access to cheap OTPs. Please consider passing it to save kids from life long addiction.

Mahalo,

Eric Burgmeister
Maui REAL Member

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**

Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

Hi, my name is Silver Hunt; I am 18 years old, a registered voter in Hawaii, and from the island of Kauai. I am currently a special projects board member with REAL. I'm in strong support of the HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

Many people I have talked to personally do not think smokeless tobacco is all that harmful, but it really is. It leads to serious health problems such as mouth, throat, cheek, and esophageal cancer, along with gum disease. For the most part, I'm concerned about how attractive these products are to the youth. Not only are these products cheaper than cigarettes, but there are several different flavors, colors, and appear to be neither as dangerous nor addictive then cigarette smoking.

Based on what research shows when it comes to tobacco, young people are cheapskates. Increasing the taxes will increase the price and may help to keep youth from purchasing them. This will most definitely lead to less people who become addicted to nicotine and save Hawaii millions of dollars each year in health related costs. Most importantly, increasing this tax will protect kids and generations to come, from becoming life-long "customers" of the tobacco industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs).

Silver Hunt

Kauai REAL

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Brandon Antonius and I am a registered voter in Maui, Hawaii. I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

While smokeless tobacco use leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer and gum disease, I'm most concerned about how attractive these products are to youth. Not only are these products cheaper than cigarettes, but they are colorful and fruit-flavored and come across as being less dangerous and addictive than cigarette smoking.

I began smoking at age 11, and though I have dedicated years to the prevention of youth using tobacco, I still have not been able to fully stop smoking cigarettes. Nicotine is the most addictive substance in the world, and these youth friendly OTP's are what begin to addict our youth and cause them to become lifetime users of this deadly product. I wasn't addicted when I was 11, but because they made it cool, available and youth friendly, I still am addicted today.

Research shows that when it comes to tobacco young people are price sensitive. Increasing the taxes will increase the price and may help to keep youth from purchasing them. This will ultimately lead to less people who become addicted to nicotine and save Hawaii millions of dollars each year in health related costs. Most importantly, increasing this tax will protect kids from becoming life-long "customers" of the tobacco industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs)

Mahalo for your consideration,

Brandon Paul Antonius

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Ashley Hudson and high school student in the state of Hawaii on the island of Maui. I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

This law will help keep tobacco products out of the hands of young kids.

Mahalo,

Ashley Hudson
REAL Youth Leader

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Alex Halley. I'm a senior at Baldwin High School on Maui and a leader with REAL: Hawaii Youth Movement Exposing the Tobacco Industry.

I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

The tobacco companies know that if OTPs are taxed, then the public won't buy as much. This is especially true of youth.

Please pass this law to tax OTPs and keep these products out of the hands of Hawaii's youth.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs)

Thank you,
Alex Halley

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Becky Marini and I am from Ewa Beach and leader with REAL. I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

I think that it's important to raise taxes on OTPs because it'll prevent youth from buying the products. Right now OTPs are a lot cheaper than regular cigarettes that have high tax rates. This makes OTPs very attractive to youth because they are so cheap and pretty easy to get. I'm asking that you please pass this measure.

Thank you,
Becky Marini
REAL Oahu Leader

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Brandon Johnston, and I'm a high school student at Maui High. I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

While smokeless tobacco use leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer and gum disease, I'm most concerned about how attractive these products are to youth. Not only are these products cheaper than cigarettes, but they are colorful and fruit-flavored and come across as being less dangerous and addictive than cigarette smoking.

I'm part of The REAL Movement which has helped me so much in knowing how the tobacco company targets teens/consumers. It has opened my eyes to really see how they operate their company and how they advertise their product in an organized fashion.

Raising the taxes on other tobacco products on Hawaii is important. It will make it harder for young people across the state to be able to buy the product. I think raising the taxes is a good thing and an action that should be taken to have that percentage of Hawaii's teens get off using tobacco products.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs). Please help to save the lives of potential future tobacco users by continuing to do everything in your power to prevent tobacco use.

Mahalo,

Brandon Johnston
Maui REAL

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support of HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

Dear Committee:

My name is Stephanie Franklin, and I am a registered voter in Hawaii. I work on Maui as an Island Coordinator for REAL: Hawaii's youth-led movement against the tobacco industry. I'm in strong support of HB273, HD1 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as Snus, Skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

OTPs are extremely youth friendly. They come in a wide variety of candy and fruit flavors and are often times placed close to candies, chips, and other products enjoyed by youth. The big tobacco companies are using these deceptive marketing techniques to specifically target youth as new tobacco users. These brightly colored and candy flavored products come across being less dangerous than cigarette smoking, but smokeless tobacco still leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer and gum disease.

These smokeless and spitless products are sold at substantially cheaper prices than cigarettes, which make them more accessible to youth. Research shows that when it comes to tobacco young people are price sensitive. Increasing the taxes will make these products unaffordable to youth, who live on a tight budget. Essentially less youth will be able to purchase these products and less people will become addicted to nicotine. This will save Hawaii millions of dollars each year in health related costs. Most importantly, increasing this tax will protect kids from becoming life-long "customers" of the tobacco industry, and will therefore, save lives.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs).

Sincerely,

Stephanie Franklin

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support of HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**

Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Nicole Sutton and I am a registered voter in Hawaii. I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

Raising the tax on OTPs is a step in the right direction for Hawaii's future. I think it's safe to say that many of know the serious health effects associated with the use of tobacco products, but what is most alarming to me is how these OTP products are so youth-friendly. They are also extremely cheap when compared to cigarettes and therefore are most accessible for youth to experiment with, possibly opening the door to a life-time addiction to nicotine.

We know from research that young people are price sensitive. Increasing the tax will increase the price of these products and may help to keep youth from purchasing them. This will ultimately lead to less people who become addicted to nicotine and save Hawaii millions of dollars each year in health related costs. Most importantly, increasing this tax will protect kids from becoming potential life-long "customers" of the tobacco industry.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Nicole Sutton
Pearl City, Hawaii

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Michelle Magdirila and I am a registered voter in Hawaii. I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

While smokeless tobacco use leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer and gum disease, I'm most concerned about how attractive these products are to youth. Not only are these products cheaper than cigarettes, but they are colorful and fruit-flavored and come across as being less dangerous and addictive than cigarette smoking.

From being a part of doing the Tobacco & Alcohol Advertising Survey (TAAS) with REAL, I have learned a lot which I have not known before. OTPS are being marketed to be something that is "OK" but it's not. It's still tobacco...it's still addictive...and it still kills! OPTS are targeted more towards children than they are adults. Tobacco companies use these tactics to hook new users who will replace customers that die every year. You can't even tell the difference between some OTPS and candy. You put an OTP and a candy side by side and it looks exactly the same, making children think that it is candy. This is wrong.

Research shows that when it comes to tobacco young people are price sensitive. Increasing the taxes will increase the price and may help to keep youth from purchasing them. This will ultimately lead to less people who become addicted to nicotine and save Hawaii millions of dollars each year in health related costs. Most importantly, increasing this tax will protect kids from becoming life-long "customers" of the tobacco industry.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Michelle Magdirila
Molokai REAL

Feleai Tau

From: Nancy Parker [nparker@hhsc.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2011 11:33 AM
To: HTHTestimony
Subject: HB 273 HD 1 Boiler Plate for Senate Health Cmte
Attachments: header.htm

For March 18, 2011 Senate Health Hearing at 3:00 p.m. in Room 229

To: Senator Josh Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health

HB 273 HD 1

Re: **Strong Support for HB 237, HD 1 Relating to Tobacco Products**

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in **strong support** of HB 237, HD 1. My name is **Nancy Parker**. I work for Maui Memorial Medical Center, which is an Acute Care Hospital on the Island of Maui, Hawaii. I am a Respiratory Practitioner who educates patients suffering from lung disease. I support HB 237 because it is a win-win for our State.

Our state will see more tax revenue and we will see less people using tobacco products, leading to preventable disease. Smokeless tobacco use leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer, gum disease; and it increases the risk for cardiovascular disease.

An increase in the cost on tobacco products will result in less people using smokeless tobacco. Youth are more sensitive to prices than adults. We must do as much as we can to prevent youth from using tobacco. Children, especially boys and young men, who use smokeless tobacco are at an increased risk to become future smokers.

As cigarette tax increases rise, smokers will look at quitting or they will find cheaper means to continue using tobacco. We must be sure taxes on all tobacco products are equitable so that those who are addicted to nicotine will quit. More smokers quitting means less costs to our state in tobacco-related medical expenses. I also ask that you earmark some of this tax to fund tobacco cessation and prevention programs. As we encourage tobacco users to quit, we must provide tobacco treatment for them.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in the tax on other tobacco products.

Nancy Parker

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

March 17th, 2011

Hi my name is Kiana Cordeiro. I am currently a junior at H.P. Baldwin High. I am strongly for HB 273. I feel that you should raise the taxes on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs). Tobacco is the number one killer of people it is still one of the deadliest legal drugs.

I am a member of REAL and we are very aware of what the dangers of tobacco. We need to have strong laws that make getting a hold of these products more difficult for everyone. In the meantime, tobacco companies continue to make and market their products to catch the eyes of young children. I am not impressed by their attempts.

Studies show that approximately 4,800 adolescents and 5,500 youth try a tobacco product every day and that out of the 10,300 young adults about 3,000 of them become consistent users of tobacco.

I am strongly for this bill because you will be making it harder for youth to get this product. Youth don't go for things that are expensive, so if you up the tax then less of them will want to get it. Making it harder to get will protect youth from destroying their lives and it will save Hawaii millions of dollars for the health costs. You will be protecting the youth and community of Hawaii if you raise the taxes on this product.

Thank you for allowing me to provide this testimony and hearing my ideas about increasing taxes on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs).

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kiana Cordeiro

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Shay Revuelto. I am from Mililani and a youth member of REAL: Hawaii Youth Movement Exposing The Tobacco Industry.

I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

I want the taxes to be raised because it's another reason for people to stop using tobacco products. If prices go up on OTP's people will start to realize how unimportant tobacco products are in their lives and may go without them while instead purchasing other necessities that they need to lead a healthy life.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs)

Thank you,
Shay Revuelto

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Sarafina Huck and I am youth member of REAL on Maui. I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos). As a REAL member I have learned of the manipulations of the tobacco industry and have become part of the fight towards making Hawaii tobacco-free.

While smokeless tobacco use leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer and gum disease, I'm most concerned about how attractive these products are to youth. Not only are these products cheaper than cigarettes, but they are colorful and fruit-flavored and come across as being less dangerous and addictive than cigarette smoking.

Research shows that when it comes to tobacco young people are price sensitive. Increasing the taxes will increase the price and may help to keep youth from purchasing them. This will ultimately lead to less people who become addicted to nicotine and save Hawaii millions of dollars each year in health related costs. Most importantly, increasing this tax will protect kids from becoming life-long "customers" of the tobacco industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs)

Sarafina Huck
Maui

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

March 17th, 2011

Aloha,

My name is Donalyn Naihe and I am an authentic state representative for REAL. Being a part of this state representative board allows me to evoke my findings on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) to my community. As I gather information from the youth in my area, of Hana, Maui, I am able to conclude that we all support HB 273. HB 273 would raise taxes on OTPs such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

These 'Other Tobacco Products' are very pervasive and appealing to youth that it makes me wonder if there will come a day when youth will stop being targeted by adult products. These OTPs come in a variety of flavors and are animated with different colors and designs. OTPs also are known to be as addictive and cheaper than cigarette smoking.

As a well educated youth on OTPs I say that we, the youth, are genuine human beings that understand what these companies are trying to do. By increasing these taxes it will help lessen the pressure that is put among our youths.

I also want to say that The REAL Movement can influence a true outcome that will less usage of nicotine throughout this state. The youth of Hawaii are too smart to be used by companies as 'life-long' consumers of their products.

Mahalo for you time and consideration,

Donalyn Naihe
Hana, Maui
REAL

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

My name is Melissa Rapoza and I'm part of REAL on the island of Hawaii.

I'm in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

While smokeless tobacco use leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer and gum disease, I'm most concerned about how attractive these products are to youth. Not only are these products cheaper than cigarettes, but they are colorful and fruit-flavored and come across as being less dangerous and addictive than cigarette smoking.

These products are also marketed to youth involved within the rodeo circuit and is of great concern to us here on own island.

Increasing the cost will lead to higher purchasing price which will affect youths ability to purchase.

Mahalo,

Melissa Rapoza
REAL Big Island

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

Aloha,

My name is Melissa Chong. I'm 21 years old from Hilo on the Big Island and a young adult advocate with REAL: Hawaii's Youth Movement Exposing Big Tobacco. I'm writing to you because I am in strong support of HB 273 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) are made to target youth because not only are they much cheaper so that young people can afford them, but they're made with flavors that young people are attracted to like cherry, strawberry, vanilla, grape, and so on. This can easily mislead young people into thinking these products are less harmful and less addictive than cigarettes which isn't true. Currently the cost of OTPs are a lot cheaper when compared to cigarettes which further makes these products youth-friendly.

Ultimately I feel if taxes are raised on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs), less people will use them and become addicted to nicotine. In the long run this will save thousands of lives and save millions of dollars in healthcare costs for Hawaii. Most importantly, we would reduce the amount of young people who start using tobacco and become addicted.

Again please support HB 273.

Mahalo,

Melissa Chong

REAL: Hawaii Youth Movement Exposing the Tobacco Industry

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

March 17th, 2011

My name is Lei Gaspar, a resident of Maui. I'm in strong support of HB 273, which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as Snus, Skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

Being a young independent woman in Hawaii, I have noticed the high demand of tobacco products. It is to your advantage of the older generation to help protect our generation from the diseased habit of smoking and nicotine addiction while helping to relieve our youth of the daily doses of stress, depression, and aggravation. Tobacco hinders our health; however, we are constantly bombarded with advertising and newer and better products. New products are becoming more and more youth friendly.

Research shows that when it comes to tobacco young people are price sensitive. Increasing the taxes will increase the price and may help to keep youth from purchasing them. This will ultimately lead to less people who become addicted to nicotine and save Hawaii millions of dollars each year in health related costs. Most importantly, increasing this tax will protect kids from becoming life-long "customers" of the tobacco industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs)

Mahalo for your consideration,

Lei Gaspar

REAL Member

My name is Lei Gaspar, a resident of Maui. I'm in strong support of SB 233, which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as Snus, Skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

Being a young independent woman in Hawaii, I have noticed the high demand of tobacco products. It is to your advantage of the older generation to not pass on the diseased habit of smoking and relieve our youth of the daily doses of stress, depression, and aggravation. Tobacco hinders our health; however, we are constantly bombarded with advertising and newer and better products. New products are becoming more and more youth friendly.

Research shows that when it comes to tobacco young people are price sensitive. Increasing the taxes will increase the price and may help to keep youth from purchasing them. This will ultimately lead to less people who become addicted to nicotine and save Hawaii millions of dollars each year in health related costs. Most importantly, increasing this tax will protect kids from becoming life-long "customers" of the tobacco industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs)

Mahalo for your consideration,

,

Lei Gaspar

My name is Brandon Johnston, and I'm a high school student at Maui High. I'm in strong support of SB 233 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

While smokeless tobacco use leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer and gum disease, I'm most concerned about how attractive these products are to youth. Not only are these products cheaper than cigarettes, but they are colorful and fruit-flavored and come across as being less dangerous and addictive than cigarette smoking.

The REAL movement has helped me so much in knowing how the tobacco company targets teens/consumers. It has opened my eyes to really see how they operate their company and how they advertise their product in an organized fashion. They have their buyers buy tobacco products that have more nicotine causing them to stay hooked on it rather than being able to quit. The REAL movement is not against smokers. The REAL movement is just against tobacco industry. Raising the taxes on other tobacco products on Hawaii is important. It will make it harder for young people across the state to be able to buy the product. I think raising the taxes is a good thing and an action that should be taken to have that percentage of Hawaii's teens off their product increase.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs). Please help to save the lives of future tobacco users by continuing to do everything in your power to prevent tobacco use.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Brandon Johnston

February 1, 2011

To: Senator Josh Booth Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for SB 233, Relating to Tobacco Products**
HTH COMMITTEE; February 2, 2011 at 2:45 p.m.; Rm 229

My name is Donalyn Naihe and I am an authentic state representative for REAL. Being a part of this state representative board allows me to evoke my findings on Other Tobacco Products (OTP's) to my community. As I gather subjective information from the youth in my area, of Hana, Maui, I am able to conclude that we all support SB 233. SB 233 would raise taxes on OTP's such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

These 'Other Tobacco Products' are very pervasive and appealing to youth that it makes me wonder if there will come a day when youth will stop being targeted by adult products. These OTP's come in a verity of flavors and are animated with different colors and designs. OTP's also are known to be more addictive and cheaper than cigarette smoking.

As a well educated youth on OTP's I say that we, the youth, are not cursory human beings and that we understand what these companies are trying to do. I am one of many strong voices that see adults distort our ideas and do nothing to help us complete our challenge.

By increasing these taxes it will help lessen the pressure that is put among our youths. This movement can have an authentic outcome that will be a result of less usage of nicotine throughout this state. The youth of Hawaii are too smart and amiable to be 'life-long' consumers of Other Tobacco Products.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide you with my testimony in support of an increasing in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OPT).

Mahalo for you time and consideration,

Donalyn Naihe

February 1, 2011

To: Senator Josh Booth Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for SB 233, Relating to Tobacco Products**
HTH COMMITTEE; February 2, 2011 at 2:45 p.m.; Rm 229

Strong Support for SB 233, Relating to Tobacco Products
HTH COMMITTEE; February 2, 2011 at 2:45 p.m.; Rm 229

My name is Eric Burgemeister and I am a REAL member. REAL is an anti tobacco youth group. I'm in strong support of SB 233 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

While smokeless tobacco use leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer and gum disease, I'm most concerned about how attractive these products are to youth. Not only are these products cheaper than cigarettes, but they are colorful and fruit-flavored and come across as being less dangerous and addictive than cigarette smoking.

Research shows that when it comes to tobacco young people are price sensitive. Increasing the taxes will increase the price and may help to keep youth from purchasing them. This will ultimately lead to less people who become addicted to nicotine and save Hawaii millions of dollars each year in health related costs. Most importantly, increasing this tax will protect kids from becoming life-long "customers" of the tobacco industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs)

Mahalo for your consideration,

Eric Burgmeister

FEB. 1. 2011

To: Senator Josh Booth Green, M.D.,
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Member, Senator Committee On Health

Re: **Strong Support For SB 233, Relating To Tobacco Products**
HTH COMMITTEE; FEB 2, 2011 at 2:45 pm.;Rm 229

Aloha,

My name is Stephanie Franklin, and I am a registered voter in Hawaii. I work on Maui as an Island Coordinator for REAL: Hawaii's youth-led movement against the tobacco industry. I'm in strong support of SB 233, which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as Snus, Skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

OTPs are extremely youth friendly. They come in a wide variety of candy and fruit flavors and are often times placed close to candies, chips, and other products enjoyed by youth. The big tobacco companies are using these deceptive marketing techniques to specifically target youth as new tobacco users. These brightly colored and candy flavored products come across being less dangerous than cigarette smoking, but smokeless tobacco still leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer and gum disease.

These smokeless and spitless products are sold at substantially cheaper prices than cigarettes, which make them more accessible to youth. Research shows that when it comes to tobacco young people are price sensitive. Increasing the taxes will make these products unaffordable to youth, who live on a tight budget. Essentially less youth will be able to purchase these products and less people will become addicted to nicotine. This will save Hawaii millions of dollars each year in health related costs. Most importantly, increasing this tax will protect kids from becoming life-long "customers" of the tobacco industry, and will therefore, save lives.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs).

Sincerely,

Stephanie Franklin

February 1, 2011

To:

Senator Josh Booth Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re:

HTH COMMITTEE; February 2, 2011 at 2:45 p.m.; Rm 229

Hi my name is Kiana Cordeiro. I am currently a junior at H.P. Baldwin High. I am strongly for SB 233. I feel that you should raise the taxes on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs). Though tobacco is not the number one killer of people it is still one of the deadliest legal drugs.

I am a member of REAL and we are very aware of what the dangers of tobacco are. Sadly in Hawaii, the laws on drug use seem to lower, you should be raising them not making them easier to get hold of. Tobacco companies continue to make their products more appealing to the eyes of children. Though the tobacco companies point is to catch the eyes of young children, I am not impressed by their attempts.

Studies show that approximately 4800 adolescents and 5500 youth try a tobacco product every day and that out of the 10,300 young adults about 3000 of them become consistent users of tobacco. Many of these young adults grow up to be tobacco users and 90% of men die due to the amount of tar in their lungs clogging their arteries and 80% of women die due to lung cancer.

I am strongly for this bill because you will be making it harder for youth to get this product. Youth don't go for things that are expensive, so if you up the tax then less of them will want to get it. Making it harder to get will protect youth from destroying their lives and it will save Hawaii millions of dollars for the health costs will be lower. You will be protecting the youth and community of Hawaii if you raise the taxes on this product.

Thank you for allowing me to provide this testimony and hearing my ideas about increasing taxes on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs).

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kiana Cordeiro

February 1, 2011

To: Senator Josh Booth Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for SB 233, Relating to Tobacco Products**
HTH COMMITTEE; February 2, 2011 at 2:45 p.m.; Rm 229

February 1, 2011

To: Senator Josh Booth Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for SB 233, Relating to Tobacco Products**
HTH COMMITTEE; February 2, 2011 at 2:45 p.m.; Rm 229

My name is Monica Medrano and I am a high school student from Maui. I'm in strong support of SB 233 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

My work with REAL-Hawaii's youth led movement exposing the tobacco industry, has opened my eyes to the issue of tobacco company's target of youth. I myself am a young female and know the effect of their advertising and use of flavorings and how they greatly attract the eyes of those in my generation. This law will help make products more expensive and help to keep them out of the hands of youth.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs)

Mahalo for your consideration,

Monica Medrano

February 1, 2011

To: Senator Josh Booth Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for SB 233, Relating to Tobacco Products**

February 1, 2011

To: Senator Josh Booth Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for SB 233, Relating to Tobacco Products**
HTH COMMITTEE; February 2, 2011 at 2:45 p.m.; Rm 229

My name is Ashley Hudson and high school student in the state of Hawaii. I'm in strong support of SB 233 which would raise the tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) such as snus, skoal, and mini-cigars (cigarillos).

While smokeless tobacco use leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer and gum disease, I'm most concerned about how attractive these products are to youth. Not only are these products cheaper than cigarettes, but they are colorful and fruit-flavored and come across as being less dangerous and addictive than cigarette smoking.

Research shows that when it comes to tobacco young people are price sensitive. Increasing the taxes will increase the price and may help to keep youth from purchasing them. This will ultimately lead to less people who become addicted to nicotine and save Hawaii millions of dollars each year in health related costs. Most importantly, increasing this tax will protect kids from becoming life-long "customers" of the tobacco industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in tax on Other Tobacco Products (OTPs). Please help to save the lives of future tobacco users by continuing to do everything in your power to prevent tobacco use.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Ashley Hudson

RON FLECK, M.S., C.R.C. VOCATIONAL CONSULTANT

75-5660 KOPIKO STREET, SUITE C7-330, KAILUA-KONA, HI 96740
(808) 329-2888 * Fax (808) 326-1999 e-mail: fleckconsulting@hawaiiantel.net

For March 18, 2011 Senate Health Hearing at 3:00 p.m. in Room 229

To: Senator Josh Green, M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 237, HD 1 Relating to Tobacco Products**

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in strong support of HB 237, HD 1. My name is Ron Fleck, business owner of Ron Fleck Vocational Consulting. I support HB 237 because it is a win-win for our State.

Our state will see more tax revenue and we will see less people using tobacco products, leading to preventable disease. Smokeless tobacco use leads to serious health issues including esophageal cancer, gum disease; and it increases the risk for cardiovascular disease.

An increase in the cost on tobacco products will result in less people using smokeless tobacco. Youth are more sensitive to prices than adults. We must do as much as we can to prevent youth from using tobacco. Children, especially boys and young men, who use smokeless tobacco are at an increased risk to become future smokers.

As cigarette tax increases rise, smokers will look at quitting or they will find cheaper means to continue using tobacco. We must be sure taxes on all tobacco products are equitable so that those who are addicted to nicotine will quit. More smokers quitting means less costs to our state in tobacco-related medical expenses. I also ask that you earmark some of this tax to fund tobacco cessation and prevention programs. As we encourage tobacco users to quit, we must provide tobacco treatment for them.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of an increase in the tax on other tobacco products.

Primarily serving the Big Island and Kauai

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

Dear Legislator,

My name is Chloe Marchant and I am from the island of Kauai. I am a member of REAL: Hawaii's Youth Movement Exposing the Tobacco Industry.

I am writing in strong support of HB 273 that would increase taxes on the Other Tobacco Products (OTP), such as cigars, smokeless tobacco, spit-less and dissolvable tobacco. These products are being targeted to youth by tobacco companies and they are very cheap to purchase.

Increasing taxes on these products will help keep them out of the hands of kids!

Thank You,
Chloe Marchant

March 17th, 2011

To: Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair, Committee on Health
Senator Clarence K. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, Committee on Health
Members, Senate Committee on Health

Re: **Strong Support for HB 273, HD1 Relating to Tobacco Products**
Health Committee Hearing; March 18th, 2011 at 3:00 pm; Room 229

Aloha Legislators,

My name is John Pimentel. I am from the island of Hawaii and am a member of REAL: Hawaii's Youth Movement Exposing the Tobacco Industry.

I strongly support HB 273 that would increase taxes on other tobacco products (OTPs) because it will decrease the number of youth tobacco users in Hawaii. I believe that youth do not understand that Other Tobacco Products (OTP) can lead to dangerous health problems. By raising the taxes of OTPs you will discourage youth from buying these harmful products.

Please pass the bill to increase the taxes on Other Tobacco Products.

Much Mahalo,
John Pimentel