



Vapor, Smokeless Tobacco, and New Nicotine Taxes

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

- **Share your experience with switching to vapor products.** If affordability compared to continuing to smoke was a motivating factor for trying vaping or other smoke-free products, be sure to include that in your comments. Conversely, if the already high initial cost of these products delayed your initial purchase, highlight this instead. Be sure to include any changes in your health that you've experienced as a result of switching to safer nicotine or tobacco products.
- **Taxes on traditional cigarettes are intended to discourage use.** But, e-cigarettes and other smoke-free tobacco products are estimated to be 98 – 99% less harmful than smoking, discouraging use is counter to the goals of reducing smoking rates.
- **Other governments are taking exactly the opposite approach.** Public Health England (the government public health agency) recently explicitly endorsed a policy of encouraging people who smoke to switch to e-cigarettes and vapor products (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/e-cigarettes-an-evidence-update>).
- **Sin taxes are regressive.** People who smoke and those who switch to vaping and other smoke-free alternatives are disproportionately poor and low income people. Sin taxes place unnecessary burdens on an already financially challenged group. To make matters worse, people in the low-income bracket are less likely to be insured and lack access to health care providers. The affordable resources available to these people have low success rates.
- **Imposing a tax on these products will drive consumers to shop in neighboring states** that do not have a similar tax. At the same time, consumers will be encouraged to **shop online** for better deals, sending even more money out of the community. Local businesses will not be able to compete, be forced to close their doors, and jobs will be lost. This is bad for the city/state and will result in less revenue, not more.
- Note that vapor products are **already subject to a general sales tax.**
- Taxing smoke-free tobacco and nicotine products in a manner similar to how combustible tobacco products are taxed **sends a confusing and inaccurate message to would-be adopters** that these two very different products present similar risks. The result of this message is that more people, those that otherwise would have switched to a smoke-free product, will be encouraged to continue smoking.