

February 24, 2025

Dear Chair Solomon and Members of the House Corporations Committee,

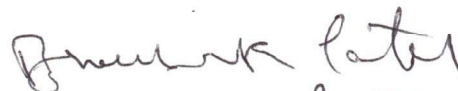
My name is Donny Patel, and I am the owner of a local convenience store. I am writing to express my serious concerns regarding HB 5329. I strongly oppose this bill because it would create an unfair marketplace by exempting vape shops from the flavor ban on vapor products. I strongly believe this legislation creates an unfair and unlevel playing field for businesses across the state.

HB 5329 unfairly favors one type of retailer over others. This bill establishes a clear "winner" and "loser" dynamic within the retail community. Why should convenience stores be treated differently than vape shops when it comes to selling vapor products? As responsible retailers, we check IDs when selling vapor products or any other age-restricted items to ensure compliance with state laws and protect youth. There is no reason to give vape shops an advantage over convenience stores by allowing them to sell flavored vapor products while we cannot. By allowing vape shops to sell flavored vapor products, the state would create a scenario where businesses like mine are put at a competitive disadvantage.

I respectfully ask that you do not advance HB 5329 by voting against it. This will ensure that all retail businesses are treated equally, and Rhode Island can maintain a competitive and level playing field.

Sincerely,

Donny Patel


BHADRASH PATEL

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