

To: Members of the Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee

Fr: Joe Rosato, Director, Government Relations, Ohio State Medical Association

Da: November 28, 2023

Re: HB 258

---

On behalf of the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA), the state's oldest and largest professional organization representing Ohio physicians, medical residents, and medical students, I thank Chair Abrams, Vice Chair Williams, Ranking Member Brown, and the members of the House Criminal Justice Committee for the opportunity to provide proponent written testimony regarding House Bill 258.

This legislation would accomplish two primary objectives: increasing penalties and fines for repeat offenders caught selling cigarettes, tobacco, or other alternative nicotine products to minors; and, making those retailers who repeatedly violate the law regarding sale of these products to minors subject to Ohio's public nuisance law.

It is the policy of OSMA to support stricter regulation of substances linked to vaping-associated lung injury, as well as to support restriction of sale of e-cigarette flavors that appeal particularly to minors. Our members are also dedicated to educating the public regarding the health impacts of tobacco and vape product use.

While the problem of Ohio children using tobacco and vape products is multifaceted and complex, we believe HB 258 is a reasonable step to take in order to better address one major aspect of the issue – poor regulation of tobacco sales to minors.

Thank you for your consideration of our remarks on House Bill 258. As always, we appreciate the opportunity to be a meaningful part of the legislative process. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further.