



American
Heart
Association.

13 December 2022

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American Heart Association
Opponent Testimony
HB 513 – Ohio Senate Ways and Means Committee

Chair Blessing, Vice Chair Roegner, and Ranking Minority Member Martin, as the state government relations director for the American Heart Association, I am asking you to stand firm and safeguard the ability of our local governments to protect their citizens from the dangers of tobacco and vapor products and not support any language changes to HB 513 that would preempt the ability for communities to enact their own tobacco control laws.

Local governments were the first to implement local solutions to protect citizens by passing tobacco 21 laws and smoke-free ordinances in the state. If this amendment is passed it will keep local communities from being able to innovate and adopt local solutions for local problems.

Every community is different and deserves to find what works for them. This amendment would create a one-size fits all approach, and that isn't Ohio. After all, we are a home rule state.

Communities are interested in taking the vaping epidemic into their own hands to combat the marketing tactics of big tobacco companies. Flavored e-cigarettes are driving that youth e-cigarette epidemic. Currently nearly 29% of youth use these products, of those, 82.9% reported the use of flavored e-cigarettes. In 2019, 97% of youth e-cigarette users report using a flavored product in the past month, and 70% cite flavors as a key reason for their use.

We ask that you not take away the ability for residents and councilors to act locally to address health issues like youth tobacco use. Essentially, don't take away the power of our local governments.

Residents and leaders know best how to address problems like youth tobacco use facing their community - because they see them up close. When they work together to come up with a solution, the state should help them improve it - not create roadblocks

Communities are uniquely positioned to address their own issues and find solutions. We strongly encourage the committee to choose the lives of children over Big Tobacco and vote against any proposal that would limit the ability of communities to protect the health and well-being of Ohio's children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.