



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

Written Testimony of Commissioner Scott D. Jackson
Public Health Committee Public Hearing
Monday, March 4, 2019

The Department of Revenue Services (DRS) would like to offer comments on House Bill 7200, *An Act Prohibiting the Sale of Cigarettes, Tobacco Products, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems and Vapor Products to Persons Under Age Twenty-one.*

DRS fully supports the underlying concept of HB 7200, which is to keep cigarettes, tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) and vapor products out of the hands of individuals younger than twenty-one. The impact of these products on public and community health is significant, and DRS is proud of the role it plays, alongside our sister agencies, in both enforcing the law and reducing nicotine addiction in all of our towns and cities. However, the bill as drafted presents significant administrative challenges as DRS does not currently have the resources or tools to carry out the provisions of the bill, including conducting annual inspections of *all* dealers and distributors of these products, and the related follow-up for noncompliance.

DRS currently works with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) in delivering educational programs to residents, specifically minors, to reduce the usage of tobacco and nicotine products. DMHAS conducts compliance inspections and provides an education component to retailers that reduces access to these products by minors. This collaborative approach for tobacco works and provides an effective path forward that capitalizes on the authority, skills and capacities of each agency.

We would encourage the Committee to consider Governor Lamont's approach in Senate Bill 877, which also prohibits the sale of these products to persons under age twenty-one, while maintaining the affected agencies' current responsibilities in both the education and enforcement components. As always, DRS is available to discuss this matter further and work collaboratively to achieve the outcomes that we all support. Thank you for considering our comments.