

Submitter: Arashvir Sidhu

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB702

My name is Arash, and my family has owned a small convenience store in a quiet corner of Oregon for nearly 15 years. We poured everything we had into this business—our savings, our energy, and our time. We raised our children in the backroom while we worked long nights, just to make sure our bills were paid and our shelves were stocked. This store isn't just our livelihood—it's our legacy.

But today, I'm writing with a heavy heart. SB 702A, if passed, could quietly destroy everything we've built. It may seem like just another regulation aimed at flavored nicotine products, but to us, it's a death sentence.

Most people assume flavored vape products are only sold at vape shops—but that's far from the truth. Convenience stores like ours rely heavily on these sales to stay afloat. When you walk into our store, you'll find a little bit of everything: snacks, cold drinks, lotto tickets, and yes—nicotine pouches and flavored vapes behind the counter. These products don't just sit there—they move. And the margins they bring help us pay our employees, fix the freezer when it breaks, and keep our doors open during slow seasons.

You might think we can just “make it up” by selling something else. But we've tried. Our business is a delicate balance—one that depends on fair competition and consistent rules. If this bill passes and favors one type of retailer over another—say, allowing vape shops to sell what we cannot—it creates an uneven playing field. You're not just targeting a product; you're quietly deciding who gets to survive and who doesn't.

The saddest part? No one from the outside will notice when we close. There won't be headlines. There won't be protests. There will just be one less light on in the neighborhood, one less store that knows your name when you walk in.

I'm not asking for special treatment. I'm just asking for fairness. If lawmakers want to regulate flavored nicotine products, do it fairly across the board. Don't save vape shops by killing convenience stores—or vice versa. Let us compete. Let the customers decide. Leave it where it is, and keep healthy competition alive in Oregon.

We've already weathered inflation, theft, labor shortages, and a pandemic. Please don't let SB 702A be the final blow.