



February 7, 2024

Testimony of Laura Hale
American Heart Association
Support SB 244 Public Health - Clean Indoor Air Act - Revisions

Dear Chair Beidle and Honorable Members of the Finance Committee,

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important legislation for heart health. My name is Laura Hale and I am the Director of Government Relations for the American Heart Association. The American Heart Association extends its support for SB 244 updating the Clean Indoor Air Act to include new tobacco products (Electronic Smoking Devices) and cannabis.

Protecting the Clean Indoor Air Act is key to maintaining the health of Marylanders. Since the Act was passed families and workers have been protected from secondhand smoke where they eat, live, and play. However, we see new threats from secondhand smoke from electronic smoking devices and cannabis. It is essential that we protect all Marylanders from secondhand smoke.

It is key that in updating that we do not weaken this vital legislation. Setting the stage that alcohol and smoking are no longer synonymous. We must keep an equal playing field for our restaurants and not allow for carve outs for cigars or cannabis. No matter what format, secondhand smoke is dangerous for people's health.

The American Heart Association is committed to making a world of longer healthier lives. The Clean Indoor Air Act does just that. The American Heart Association urges a favorable report on this legislation.

Sincerely,

Laura Hale
Director of Government Relations
American Heart Association