

Emails from Tobacco Retailers

From: Chris 888

To: Christy Gunvalsen

Subject: About the Flavored Tobacco ban... from Business Owner

Date: Thursday, February 06, 2020 1:41:16 PM

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Dear Neighborhood Preservation Manager:

My name is Longzhe (Chris) Li, the business owner of Vape Store named "Great Vape", business license 075409, located by 583 E El Camino Real, Sunnyvale CA 94087, which is less than 5 minutes walking distance from Sunnyvale Community Center. I have just received the "Proposed Ban on the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products" notice by yesterday, I can tell two major concerns the city of Sunnyvale has towards to flavored tobacco products: safety issue and increase number of youth usage. Therefore, as a business insider and tobacco retailer, I want to share some of my own opinion to help the City to understand and make better decision towards flavored tobacco product, especially the electronic cigarettes or vapes.

First of all, I want to briefly introduce myself. I'm 26 years old, currently living in San Jose, I used to live in Cupertino

& Sunnyvale area from 2009 to 2015. I graduated from Homestead High School in 2012, and majored in Nursing at De Anza College. Great Vape was established in the year of 2013, and I am the second business owner. I borrowed a

lot of money from my parents and from my friends bought the business from the previous owner in 2018. I appreciate the opportunity of allowing me owning one store in Sunnyvale, and its truly amazing that I am doing business in the city I grow up. Besides of owning a Vape Store, I used to be a cigarette smoker for 6 years. One day, my father passed me one electronic cigarette and asked me to try it and quit from smoking cigarette. After that, I almost never smoke cigarette again. I felt much better than I was, and I'm so happy I finally got the bad cigarette smell away from me. It's been over one year after I took over the business, and we (I and 5 employees) have helped

a lot of people quit smoking of cigarette, that included students from college, engineers from tech company, trainers from gym, deliver guy from post office, driver of ambulance, retired veterans who's over 70 years old, and much much more. That's why I have a lot of faith into this business, I believe that I am doing good things and helping people. It's extremely difficult for smokers to quit from smoking cigarettes, non-smokers would probably never be able to understand. And flavor is the key factor that helps smokers to quit from cigarette so fast, because it

makes cigarette smokers forget about the disgusting taste of traditional cigarettes. I'm not saying that vaping is good nor better than smoking cigarettes, it would be the best if people don't do them both. However, I strongly recommend cigarettes smokers to know more about vape, because his or her life could change from now on. And I have noticed that most of the people who submitted the survey and supports the ban are either non-smoker or have never tried any of the product, and I think City of Sunnyvale needs to listen to more voices or it's going to be strongly biased.

Secondly, I want to share my own thought of the flavors ban. What could be the consequences? Would it helps Sunnyvale lower the number of youth usage? Being honest, I don't think banning the flavor is going to work. Even if

all Smokeshops or Vaporshops were closed in Sunnyvale, youths would still be able to purchase. Because youths are

usually getting their products online. Most websites has very lose age verification, which allows anyone, any age able to purchase. Non like in the physical store, we always check IDs and prevent youth from getting it. Which means banning the flavor isn't going to bring any change. They might still be able get them from surrounding cities since Sunnyvale is so small, and surrounding City like Mountain View and Santa Clara are not banning them yet, which would lead customers to go to other city. People who wants to get them would still be able to get them, for those who don't know where to get might starts to mix their own vape liquid, which is more dangerous. So the flavor ban very likely wouldn't bring any actual change. The only change is put store like us out of business; who's following rules, paying taxes, providing job opportunities and helping people who wants to quit from smoking

cigarettes with an actual effective substitute. What city should does is enforce the regulation, and punish those who are selling to minors and making this industry looks bad. I know that we are not as big as those big tobacco companies or big tech companies who's able to provide more job opportunities or bring more funds to the society, but we are also trying our best to do our job right. Moreover, the ban would probably create a black market, which makes it even harder for City of Sunnyvale to regulate and monitor the market.

Lastly, there was never any evidence which showing flavored tobacco product or electronic cigarettes cause any harm to its user. Even the CDC had already declared that the key which caused lung disease or death was the Vitamin E acetate found in Marijuana/THC liquid, which is the type of substance we do not sell in our store. Meanwhile that the Marijuana industry and Vape industry are two completely different industry. There are too many political manipulation behind of the flavor ban, anyone who digs deep would notice that. Because big tobacco companies are just way too big, they are like the invisible hand behind of this. Because Vape is such an effective alternative that's able to substitutes and allows people to quit from traditional cigarettes; it's just not fair that people are just blindly blame everything on flavored tobacco or Vape but ignore the real causes. All thanks to Vape that the U.S. Smoking rate is hitting new low every year. China is banning Vape because all tobacco companies were owned by the Chinese government, they don't care about it's citizens healthy and do not want people to quit from smoking cigarettes, because the government wants to make more money. Today, City of Sunnyvale is doing the same thing. Nothing can be banned, what's better than banning one thing is to have a more enforced and practical regulation. For example, the constitutional ban of alcoholic beverage between 1920 to 1933, it created even more social issues and big black market as well.

Thank you for your time and reading my email my dear neighborhood perservation manager, I truly appreciate if you could re-think about the ban and let more people in the city, in the neighborhood to understand more about the fact of what's going on. We did not sell them to minor, minors purchased them from online. I have never expected that City of Sunnyvale, the heart of Silicon Valley, the center of innovation would ban Vape or flavored tobacco products. All the biggest name among vape industry were originated from here: Juul, Pax, etc,. I once read an article refers Vape as the #2 most remarkable invention in the past decade, worth to mention that #1 was 3D Printer and Vape was the only daily life invention on the list. As a young entrepreneur, the ban would really breaks my heart, because I never do anything to harm anyone, we get all of our product from authorized and legitimate distributors or wholesalers, we pay tobacco taxes and all other fees, we follow all rules and policies the government requires us to do and never sell to minors; we are just one business like every other business but didn't get treated fairly. The ban is definitely going to put me and other shops out of business, I really don't know what should I do, my store is my everything. Last year I worked so hard only got myself two days off, Thanksgiving and Christmas. I borrowed a lot of money and invested a lot of time in this business. My lease still has 4 years to terminate and there's no way for me to back out early. Also I just had a daughter, she is only 3 months old... I really don't know what should I do, I don't know what I have done wrong. And who's going to be responsible for my lost, my store is literally my everything... I don't even know who to talk to because it's just too irresistible and making me feeling hopeless.

Time will tell.

Sincerely,
Longzhe (Chris) Li
Great Vape

From: Bassery Alriashi

To: Christy Gunvalsen

Subject: Offer from business owner s Murphy st

Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2020 4:02:46 PM

ATTN: Email is from an external source; Stop, Look, and Think before opening attachments or links.

Dear Mrs. Christy Gunvalsen my name is MR. Alriashi I'm the owner of the smoke shop on

114 S Murphy ST, Sunnyvale. I'm messaging you right now regarding the flavor band in Sunnyvale and I want to share some lights on my situation as an employer and an owner of the shop. I worked for the last 20 years gathering some money to support my family and save money to become an entrepreneur. Finally, a year ago decided to move from New York to this beautiful State California to make a living for me and my family in the city of Sunnyvale knowing that this city welcomes people from around the world with open arms. I decided to spend all my money I've gathered to buy my own business that cost me \$250,000. Which was everything that I have not known that this ban will happen. Please notice that this ban will affect not just us but the adults smokers in Sunnyvale that are trying to quit smoking cigarettes. With that been said I understand that we're trying to keep the youth away from those products, we came with a few solutions that will help the city to eliminate the use of tobacco to the youth. Below are few ideas I found out after doing research

- Limited the sell of flavor tobaccos to smoke shops and smoke shops only -1
- Smoke shops to be considered adult stores of age 21 years of age and older only to enter -2
- Monitor and regulate smoke shops with the police department or Surveillance cameras that -3 the business has to pay to the city
- Major fines and penalties for whom breaks the laws -4
- Limiting smoke shops to the existing ones no one else could open another smoke shops and -5 ..offenders lose their license

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to share our concerns and point of view. As a smoke shop owner in the city of Sunnyvale , I would like to offer my time and support to make sure our youth can't have easy access to flavor tobacco. Finally, I want to thank you for taking your time reading my e-mail

Thank you
MR. Alriashi