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**Pilon, Janet**

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**Subject:** Strong Opposition to Proposed Vape Tax — Harmful to Hamilton Businesses and Public Health Goals

From: Sheri Faltas

Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:11 AM

To: <mailto:clerk@hamilton.ca>

Subject: Strong Opposition to Proposed Vape Tax — Harmful to Hamilton Businesses and Public Health Goals

Dear City Clerk,

I am writing to strongly oppose the City Council's consideration of a Municipal Vaping Products Tax, as referenced in the April 30, 2025 meeting minutes. This proposal is not only misguided but threatens to seriously harm local businesses, drive consumers into dangerous black markets, and undermine public health progress.

Let me be clear: adding another layer of tax on legal vaping products will not reduce usage — it will simply push adult consumers toward unregulated and unsafe sources. This has been proven repeatedly in jurisdictions that have tried similar measures, only to see illegal sales flourish and enforcement become nearly impossible. Meanwhile, legitimate Hamilton businesses like mine, which comply with all federal and provincial regulations, are left struggling to survive under the weight of punitive taxation.

Vape retailers are not the enemy here. We are already on the frontlines of harm reduction, helping adult smokers transition away from deadly combustible tobacco. Punishing responsible adults and small businesses will only weaken the local economy and undo years of progress in reducing smoking rates.

Furthermore, this tax would create an uneven playing field, hurting Hamilton retailers while online sellers and out-of-town competitors continue to thrive untaxed and unregulated. Is this the legacy the City wishes to leave — one that cripples local business and empowers black-market profiteers?

I urge City Council to reject this harmful and counterproductive tax proposal. Instead, let's work together on targeted solutions that address youth access and education without destroying legal businesses and restricting adult choice.

Please record my strong opposition to this tax in the public record. I expect Council to consider the full impact of this decision on the community.

Sincerely,

Sheri-Lynn Faltas

Vape Club