



**SAN
FRANCISCO
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**

June 13, 2017

The Honorable Hillary Ronen, Chair
Board of Supervisors Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: File No. 170441, Banning Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products

Dear Supervisor Ronen:

The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, representing over 2,500 local businesses with over 200,000 employees, urges the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee to delay action on the above noted ordinance further regulating the sale of tobacco products to adults.

While the health impacts from the use of tobacco products are well known and both the State of California and City of San Francisco have taken significant steps to discourage smoking, especially underage smoking, at some point local prohibitions will constitute a “taking” of businesses selling legal products.

The pending ordinance will give retailers only a matter of a few months to adjust their flavored tobacco inventories to these new prohibitions on product sales. Beyond the issue of stock on hand, a retailer’s entire business model may need to change in order to generate sufficient cash flow to meet the financial needs of his or her business. Before you threaten the livelihood of retailers in every neighborhood of the city, the Chamber urges you and your colleagues to look at other Bay Area legislation that, unlike this ordinance, takes into account the fiscal impact of tobacco sales regulations on small businesses.

Please do not lose sight of the fact that sufficient regulations are in place to control underage sale and use and funds exist to continue California’s robust anti-smoking campaign. We urge you to consider the financial needs of a significant component of neighborhood retail in San Francisco before further hindering small retailers’ ability to operate their businesses.

Sincerely,

Jim Lazarus
Senior Vice President of Public Policy
San Francisco Chamber of Commerce

cc: Mayor Ed Lee, Clerk of the Board to be distributed to all members of the Board of Supervisors