

Testimony re: S.198 – Friday, February 6th, 2026

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Intro Self – 25 years work in tobacco control across 3 states – last 20 years have been in St. Albans, parent of 2 teenagers, grew up in a household of smokers and lost my dad to lung cancer in 2023.

Relevant Work undertaken in 2025-2026:

- 22 Middle School Classrooms in 3 Supervisory Unions – 40 minutes each. I speak to Nicotine, Addiction, Compare/Contrast products, Health Impact, Why Youth Use, and Quitting. Goal is to boost knowledge, debunk myths, empower students
 - Students tell me they see ads for it online, on TikTok, on other social media, and on YouTube. Particularly influencers and other people their ages using. YouTube and online ads are slightly different than other social media in that younger kids have access to them without downloading – limited parental oversight.
 - Partner with school administrators to better support students ready to quit. From adults in schools, I hear repeatedly that youth are getting products from the adults in their world. One administrator expressed the exhaustion with the dynamic and damage (time, toilet/bathroom, trash, etc.) these products cause.
 - Students also share these products with each other – cell phone ban can help here
 - Nicotine Pouch advertising/messaging is very connected with athletic performance, attention, energy boost. Youth report using more than 1 at a time which can cause them to pass out, get sick, and get addicted fast.
- 5 High Schools partnering in Confiscated Vape Disposal Pilot
 - 59 vapes collected in 3 High Schools and 1 Middle School to date
 - Wide variety of brands and flavors, including Geek Bar and Loon (which is not sold in NY/NH/MA)
 - Lots of brands I had never heard of