

NEWS RELEASE

MALAYSIAN VAPERS ALLIANCE: TOUGH REGULATIONS WILL PUSH VAPERS BACK TO TOBACCO

Ban on display of vape products is too harsh

KUALA LUMPUR, 8 August 2024 – Malaysian Vapers Alliance (MVA), a local advocacy group for vape consumers, is voicing concerns about the potential impact of the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024 (Act 852) on the vaping community.

With Act 852 currently in its final review at the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC), MVA is urging lawmakers to consider the consequences of overly stringent regulations on vapers, especially ex-smokers who have quit smoking by switching to vaping.

A survey conducted by MVA last year revealed 73.7% of vapers in Malaysia are former smokers. MVA cautions the Government that classifying vaping products in the same category as cigarettes under the new regulations, including strict measures like a ban on display of vape products, could drive these ex-smokers back to smoking cigarettes. This shift would undermine public health efforts to reduce smoking rates.

Khairil Azizi Khairuddin, President of the Malaysian Vapers Alliance emphasised the importance of separate regulations between vape and tobacco products to prevent a regression in public health outcomes.

"Harsh regulations that fail to distinguish between vaping and smoking, like banning the display of vape products, could see many vapers, who have successfully quit smoking traditional tobacco, to revert to their old habits. Such a shift not only jeopardises their health but also reverses nationwide progress in reducing smoking prevalence in Malaysia."

"We urge the government to adopt a balanced approach that recognises the harm reduction potential of vape and provide a supportive environment for vapers to stay off tobacco."

The MVA survey also revealed that the majority of vapers (80.1%) switched to vape as it helped them quit smoking. The implementation of harsh regulations, that do not consider these facts, could undermine the progress of reducing smoking rates in the country.

"MVA calls on the Ministry of Health (MOH) to ensure that the final version of Act 852 includes sensible regulations that support harm reduction and do not classify vaping products the same as cigarettes. We believe that informed and balanced regulation can protect public health while ensuring that vapers do not revert to smoking," **Khairil** added.

MVA remains committed to advocating for the rights of vapers and supporting evidence-based policies that support harm reduction and public health. MVA will continue to engage with stakeholders and provide input to ensure that the needs and concerns of the vape community are addressed.

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About the Malaysian Vapers Alliance

The Malaysian Vapers Alliance (MVA) is a nonprofit advocacy group that champions the use of vape products to help smokers quit. MVA's work is dedicated to empowering consumers and representing their interests in various legislative, policy making, and rule-making arenas.