

NEWS RELEASE

SURVEY REVEALS MAJORITY VAPE USERS REJECT RETAIL DISPLAY BAN

KUALA LUMPUR, 19 September 2024 – Malaysian Vapers Alliance (MVA), a local advocacy group for vape consumers, has raised concerns over key elements of the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024 (Act 852), following a survey conducted recently.

The survey, which garnered close to 500 responses, aimed at understanding consumer perspectives on the impending regulations, revealed that a significant number of vapers are opposed to the retail display ban that is expected to be implemented.

The survey showed that 71.3% of respondents do not agree with the ban, citing dissatisfaction with the inability to browse through products before making a decision (39.7%) and difficulties in the purchasing process (38.3%).

The survey also uncovered that if the retail display ban comes into effect, consumers are likely to seek illegal alternatives (47.4%) or return to smoking cigarettes (44.5%). Only a small percentage (8.1%) indicated they would quit vaping altogether if faced with such restrictions.

Khairil Azizi Khairuddin, President of the Malaysian Vapers Alliance, commented on the findings, emphasising the potential dangers of pushing consumers towards unregulated products.

"The survey findings clearly show that a retail display ban is not the solution. Restricting consumers' ability to see and choose legitimate products will only drive them to the black market, where the quality and safety of products are questionable. This is not the direction we want to go in, especially as vaping serves as a harm-reduction tool for many who are trying to move away from smoking.

"We urge regulators to consider the impact such restrictions would have on consumer behaviour. Vaper users deserve the right to make informed choices, and by imposing a retail display ban, we are taking away that ability. The survey shows that consumers want the freedom to browse products and make informed decisions, which is essential for ensuring that they remain in the regulated market."

In addition to these findings, the survey also revealed that a majority of vape users are either ex-smokers or are currently transitioning from cigarettes to vape products as a harm-reduction tool (74.4%). Most vape users use nicotine liquids (81.9%) with a nicotine level of below 40mg (96.5%).

"Act 852 should prioritise measures that will encourage smokers to switch to vaping. By imposing drastic requirements on vape and not differentiating vape regulations from tobacco regulations will only cause smokers to continue smoking or push vaper users towards illegal markets or back to smoking. This will undermine the very goals of harm reduction that vaping product can support in reducing smoking prevalence in Malaysia."

"We call on the Ministry of Health to reconsider the retail display ban and work towards regulations that are both practical and effective in upholding public health while ensuring consumers have safe and legal access to products."

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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.