

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: HB-5539 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT CONCERNING CIGARETTE AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS
DISTRIBUTOR AND DEALER LICENSES AND PENALTIES FOR ELECTRONIC

Title: NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND VAPOR PRODUCTS VIOLATIONS.

Vote Date: 4/1/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/16/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill tightens the regulation and enforcement cigarette, tobacco, nicotine, and electronic vapor products by requiring applications for cigarette and tobacco products distributor and dealer licenses and renewals to provide more detailed information. Furthermore, it establishes additional penalties of violations of state law regarding the sale, offer for sale or marketing of electronic nicotine delivery systems and vapor products. This bill would require more detailed information when applying or renewing licenses. H.B.5539 also discourages illegal sales and marking by adding and strengthening penalties.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language requires certain high revenue vape and tobacco dealers to post a large compliance bond, expands background checks and ownership disclosures, and gives the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection stronger authority to deny registrations, impose fines, and seize illegal products. It also creates stricter penalties for violations and treats them as consumer protection offenses. Finally, it establishes a new system requiring manufacturers to register each product with the state and bans the sale of any unlisted products starting in 2028.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

William Tong, Attorney General stands in support of the bill as it focuses on mitigating illegal tobacco and vape sales, especially products that appeal to youth and that bypass US Food and Drug Administration recommendations. The Attorney General also supports the bill because it would require stronger licensing rules, force retailers to certify their products are legal, and allow law enforcement to seize illegal items and issue steep fines. Overall, Attorney General Tong supports this bill with the goal of protecting public health, reducing youth access, and holding retailers accountable.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Anonymous 88, Anonymous 88 submitted testimony in opposition to the bill.

Christina A. Herb, President, Connecticut Energy Marketers Association opposes this bill because they believe that while preventing youth access is important, the bill would place unrealistic and costly burdens on small, compliant retailers. Herb states that requirements like certifying manufacturer compliance with federal law overseen by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration are impractical and shift responsibility away from regulators. In their testimony, herb warns that in their opinion the bill could punish responsible businesses, create confusion across agencies, and fail to effectively target illegal sellers.

Reported by: Jake Paolino

Date: 4/13/2026