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## HOUSE BILL NO. 1570

Offered January 14, 2020

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 18.2-371.2 of the Code of Virginia, relating to possession of tobacco products, nicotine vapor products, and alternative nicotine products by persons under 21 years of age; exception; scientific study.*

Patrons—VanValkenburg and Kory

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 18.2-371.2 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 18.2-371.2. Prohibiting purchase or possession of tobacco products, nicotine vapor products, and alternative nicotine products by a person under 21 years of age or sale of tobacco products, nicotine vapor products, and alternative nicotine products to persons under 21 years of age.**

A. No person shall sell to, distribute to, purchase for, or knowingly permit the purchase by any person less than 21 years of age, knowing or having reason to believe that such person is less than 21 years of age, any tobacco product, nicotine vapor product, or alternative nicotine product.

Tobacco products, nicotine vapor products, and alternative nicotine products may be sold from a vending machine only if the machine is (i) posted with a notice, in a conspicuous manner and place, indicating that the purchase or possession of tobacco products by persons under 21 years of age is unlawful and (ii) located in a place that is not open to the general public and is not generally accessible to persons under 21 years of age. An establishment that prohibits the presence of persons under 21 years of age unless accompanied by a person 21 years of age or older is not open to the general public.

B. No person less than 21 years of age shall attempt to purchase, purchase, or possess any tobacco product, nicotine vapor product, or alternative nicotine product. The provisions of this subsection shall not be applicable to the possession of tobacco products, nicotine vapor products, or alternative nicotine products by a person less than 21 years of age (i) making a delivery of tobacco products, nicotine vapor products, or alternative nicotine products in pursuance of his employment or (ii) as part of a scientific study being conducted by an organization for the purpose of medical research to further efforts in cigarette and tobacco use prevention and cessation and tobacco product regulation, provided that such medical research has been approved by an institutional review board pursuant to applicable federal regulations or by a research review committee pursuant to Chapter 5.1 (§ 32.1-162.16 et seq.) of Title 32.1. This subsection shall not apply to purchase, attempt to purchase, or possession by a law-enforcement officer or his agent when the same is necessary in the performance of his duties.

C. No person shall sell a tobacco product, nicotine vapor product, or alternative nicotine product to any individual who does not demonstrate, by producing a driver's license or similar photo identification issued by a government agency, that the individual is at least 21 years of age. Such identification is not required from an individual whom the person has reason to believe is at least 21 years of age or who the person knows is at least 21 years of age. Proof that the person demanded, was shown, and reasonably relied upon a photo identification stating that the individual was at least 21 years of age shall be a defense to any action brought under this subsection. In determining whether a person had reason to believe an individual is at least 21 years of age, the trier of fact may consider, but is not limited to, proof of the general appearance, facial characteristics, behavior, and manner of the individual.

This subsection shall not apply to mail order or Internet sales, provided that the person offering the tobacco product, nicotine vapor product, or alternative nicotine product for sale through mail order or the Internet (i) prior to the sale of the tobacco product, nicotine vapor product, or alternative nicotine product verifies that the purchaser is at least 21 years of age through a commercially available database that is regularly used by businesses or governmental entities for the purpose of age and identity verification and (ii) uses a method of mailing, shipping, or delivery that requires the signature of a person at least 21 years of age before the tobacco product, nicotine vapor product, or alternative nicotine product will be released to the purchaser.

D. The provisions of subsections B and C shall not apply to the sale, giving, or furnishing of any tobacco product, nicotine vapor product, or alternative nicotine product to any active duty military personnel who are 18 years of age or older. An identification card issued by the Armed Forces of the United States shall be accepted as proof of age for this purpose.

E. A violation of subsection A or C by an individual or by a separate retail establishment that involves a nicotine vapor product, alternative nicotine product, or tobacco product other than a bidi is punishable by a civil penalty not to exceed \$100 for a first violation, a civil penalty not to exceed \$200

59 for a second violation, and a civil penalty not to exceed \$500 for a third or subsequent violation.

60 A violation of subsection A or C by an individual or by a separate retail establishment that involves  
61 the sale, distribution, or purchase of a bidi is punishable by a civil penalty in the amount of \$500 for a  
62 first violation, a civil penalty in the amount of \$1,000 for a second violation, and a civil penalty in the  
63 amount of \$2,500 for a third or subsequent violation. Where a defendant retail establishment offers  
64 proof that it has trained its employees concerning the requirements of this section, the court shall  
65 suspend all of the penalties imposed hereunder. However, where the court finds that a retail  
66 establishment has failed to so train its employees, the court may impose a civil penalty not to exceed  
67 \$1,000 in lieu of any penalties imposed hereunder for a violation of subsection A or C involving a  
68 nicotine vapor product, alternative nicotine product, or tobacco product other than a bidi.

69 A violation of subsection B is punishable by a civil penalty not to exceed \$100 for a first violation  
70 and a civil penalty not to exceed \$250 for a second or subsequent violation. A court may, as an  
71 alternative to the civil penalty, and upon motion of the defendant, prescribe the performance of up to 20  
72 hours of community service for a first violation of subsection B and up to 40 hours of community  
73 service for a second or subsequent violation. If the defendant fails or refuses to complete the community  
74 service as prescribed, the court may impose the civil penalty. Upon a violation of subsection B, the  
75 judge may enter an order pursuant to subdivision A 9 of § 16.1-278.8.

76 Any attorney for the Commonwealth of the county or city in which an alleged violation occurred  
77 may bring an action to recover the civil penalty, which shall be paid into the state treasury. Any  
78 law-enforcement officer may issue a summons for a violation of subsection A, B, or C.

79 F. 1. Cigarettes shall be sold only in sealed packages provided by the manufacturer, with the required  
80 health warning. The proprietor of every retail establishment that offers for sale any tobacco product,  
81 nicotine vapor product, or alternative nicotine product shall post in a conspicuous manner and place a  
82 sign or signs indicating that the sale of tobacco products, nicotine vapor products, or alternative nicotine  
83 products to any person under 21 years of age is prohibited by law. Any attorney for the county, city, or  
84 town in which an alleged violation of this subsection occurred may enforce this subsection by civil  
85 action to recover a civil penalty not to exceed \$50. The civil penalty shall be paid into the local  
86 treasury. No filing fee or other fee or cost shall be charged to the county, city, or town which instituted  
87 the action.

88 2. For the purpose of compliance with regulations of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
89 Services Administration published at 61 Federal Register 1492, the Department of Agriculture and  
90 Consumer Services may promulgate regulations which allow the Department to undertake the activities  
91 necessary to comply with such regulations.

92 3. Any attorney for the county, city, or town in which an alleged violation of this subsection  
93 occurred may enforce this subsection by civil action to recover a civil penalty not to exceed \$100. The  
94 civil penalty shall be paid into the local treasury. No filing fee or other fee or cost shall be charged to  
95 the county, city, or town which instituted the action.

96 G. Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a private cause of action.

97 H. Agents of the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority designated pursuant to § 4.1-105  
98 may issue a summons for any violation of this section.

99 I. As used in this section:

100 "Alternative nicotine product" means any noncombustible product containing nicotine that is intended  
101 for human consumption, whether chewed, absorbed, dissolved, or ingested by any other means.  
102 "Alternative nicotine product" does not include any nicotine vapor product, tobacco product, or product  
103 regulated as a drug or device by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) under Chapter V (21  
104 U.S.C. § 351 et seq.) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

105 "Bidi" means a product containing tobacco that is wrapped in temburni leaf (*diospyros melanoxylon*)  
106 or tendu leaf (*diospyros exculpra*), or any other product that is offered to, or purchased by, consumers as  
107 a bidi or beedie.

108 "Nicotine vapor product" means any noncombustible product containing nicotine that employs a  
109 heating element, power source, electronic circuit, or other electronic, chemical, or mechanical means,  
110 regardless of shape or size, that can be used to produce vapor from nicotine in a solution or other form.  
111 "Nicotine vapor product" includes any electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic  
112 pipe, or similar product or device and any cartridge or other container of nicotine in a solution or other  
113 form that is intended to be used with or in an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo,  
114 electronic pipe, or similar product or device. "Nicotine vapor product" does not include any product  
115 regulated by the FDA under Chapter V (21 U.S.C. § 351 et seq.) of the Federal Food, Drug, and  
116 Cosmetic Act.

117 "Tobacco product" means any product made of tobacco and includes cigarettes, cigars, smokeless  
118 tobacco, pipe tobacco, bidis, and wrappings. "Tobacco product" does not include any nicotine vapor  
119 product, alternative nicotine product, or product that is regulated by the FDA under Chapter V (21  
120 U.S.C. § 351 et seq.) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

**121** "Wrappings" includes papers made or sold for covering or rolling tobacco or other materials for  
**122** smoking in a manner similar to a cigarette or cigar.