



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang
Consumers Association of Penang
檳城消費人協會 பினாங்கு பயனீட்டாளர் சங்கம்

Websites:
(in English, BM, Chinese,
& Tamil)
www.consumer.org.my

10 Jalan Masjid Negeri, 11600 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia
Tel: 604-8299511 Fax: 604-8298109
email: consumerofpenang@gmail.com

Press Statement

12 October 2023

It Doesn't Make Sense to Delay GEG

The Consumers Association of Penang (CAP) finds it outrageous that in Parliament the tobacco and vape industry lobbyists met members of parliament (MPs) seeking support for the vape industry agenda recently. The lobbyists have been actively involved in derailing the Generational End Game (GEG) legislation.

We wish to point out that the government has the responsibility to protect their public health policies being influenced by commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry in line with Article 5.3 of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC).

The government should also introduce measures to limit interactions between MPs and the tobacco and vape industries, promoting transparency in such interactions. In this recent incident the industries defiled the sanctity of the Parliament House by lobbying the Special Select Committee on Health (JKPK) there. The committee's role is to further fine-tune the Smoking Product Control Bill (RUU) and make the necessary recommendations to the policy makers.

Yesterday (11 October 2023) the Health Minister YB Dr Zaliha Mustafa dropped a bombshell in a press statement, calling Malaysians to take part in a public survey on the GEG initiative that will ban the sale of tobacco and smoking products to anyone born on 1 January 2007 onwards.

As pointed out earlier, it is the responsibility of the government to prioritise public health. There is no such thing as conducting a public survey on the use of nicotine which is a highly addictive drug. It makes a mockery of the Special Select Committee on Health whose role is to assess the GEG and strengthen the bill so that it could be discussed, scrutinised and supported by all parties.

The Smoking Product Control Bill (RUU) was in fact scrutinised and approved by JKPK of the previous parliament but before it could be debated and approved, the parliament was dissolved. This delaying tactic, apparently under pressure from the tobacco lobby, is totally unjustified.

For those who argue on the rights of individuals to decide to vape, does it also mean that society can sit back while a person self-harms. Essentially there is no moral principle behind such argument and the government has the duty to limit an individual's liberty on the grounds of healthcare.

Hence, we urge for a total ban on e-cigarettes and vapes because parliament should not sacrifice the lives of younger generations to the profit of the tobacco and vape industries. The current parliament must pass the GEG soonest possible in view of the overwhelming scientific evidence that e-cigarettes and vapes have serious health consequences.

Mohideen Abdul Kader
President
Consumers Association of Penang (CAP)