



# Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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**Press Statement**

**16 October 2024**

## **CAP's Response to FSGMAM President's Claims on Tobacco and Vape Product Display Ban**

In response to recent claims made by the President of Federation of Sundry Goods Merchants Associations of Malaysia (FSGMAM), Hong Chee Meng, regarding the Malaysian Ministry of Health's (MOH) implementation of a tobacco and vape product display ban, the Consumers Association of Penang (CAP) wishes to provide clarification on the matter.

### **1. Financial Support for Compliance**

CAP opposes any financial support mechanisms for implementing the display ban. Compliance costs should be borne by the tobacco industry, which has historically provided display infrastructure at retail points. Generic white cabinets for concealed storage are inexpensive and easy to source, placing minimal financial burden on retailers.

### **2. Economic Impact on Small Retailers**

The display ban will apply uniformly across all retailers, ensuring a level playing field. Established smokers already know their preferred brands, and the ban will not disrupt sales to existing smokers. Any decline in new smokers, which may result from this measure, should be seen as a positive public health outcome.

### **3. Consultation on Compliance Period**

CAP underscores that the Smoking Products Control Act for Public Health 2024 (Act 852) aligns with Malaysia's commitment to the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). Delaying the ban would only benefit the tobacco industry at the expense of public health.

### **4. Cost of Compliance**

The compliance costs cited by FSGMAM are exaggerated. Retailers can store tobacco and vape products in any concealed storage system without requiring expensive infrastructure. Simple, low-cost solutions such as behind-the-counter cabinets suffice for compliance.

### **5. Inflated National Costs**

FSGMAM's claim that the total nationwide cost could reach RM300 million is baseless. The points of sale (POS) in Malaysia do not require significant investments for compliance, and simple storage solutions can be implemented at minimal cost.

## **6. Illicit Tobacco Market Concerns**

The issue of illicit tobacco trade has persisted in Malaysia for decades, even when cigarette prices were much lower. Blaming Act 852 for potential increases in illegal trade is misguided. The key to addressing the illicit market lies in stronger enforcement and stringent penalties for smugglers and those caught storing /selling the products.

CAP strongly advocates for a complete ban on tobacco and vape products as a critical public health measure. Any delay in implementing this ban would only benefit the tobacco industry, rather than the people of Malaysia. It is essential for Malaysians to avoid falling into the habit of smoking and vaping for the sake of their health and well-being.

**Mohideen Abdul Kader**  
**President**  
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