

STATE OF COLORADO

Colorado General Assembly

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Chelsea Stallings and Katherine Stigberg
FROM: Legislative Council Staff and Office of Legislative Legal Services
DATE: March 4, 2020
SUBJECT: Proposed initiative measure 2019-2020 #292, concerning creating a nicotine and vaping products tax

Section 1-40-105 (1), Colorado Revised Statutes, requires the directors of the Colorado Legislative Council and the Office of Legislative Legal Services to "review and comment" on initiative petitions for proposed laws and amendments to the Colorado constitution. We hereby submit our comments to you regarding the appended proposed initiative.

The purpose of this statutory requirement of the directors of Legislative Council and the Office of Legislative Legal Services is to provide comments intended to aid proponents in determining the language of their proposal and to avail the public of knowledge of the contents of the proposal. Our first objective is to be sure we understand your intent and your objective in proposing the amendment. We hope that the statements and questions contained in this memorandum will provide a basis for discussion and understanding of the proposal.

This initiative was submitted with a series of initiatives including proposed initiatives 2019-2020 ##287 to 292. The comments and questions raised in this memorandum will not include comments and questions that were addressed in the memoranda for proposed initiatives 2019-2020 ##287 to 291, except as necessary to fully understand the issues raised by the revised proposed initiative. Comments and questions addressed in those other memoranda may also be relevant, and those questions and comments are hereby incorporated by reference in this memorandum. Only new comments and questions are included in this memorandum.

Purposes

The major purposes of the proposed amendment to the Colorado Revised Statutes appear to be:

1. To increase the cigarette tax by ten cents per cigarette;
2. To allow the cigarette tax to be adjusted for inflation;
3. To remove the discount on the sale of cigarette stamps;
4. To increase the tobacco products tax by twenty-two percent of the manufacturer's list price;
5. To remove the tobacco products distributor tax reduction;
6. To create a tax on all sales and purchases of all nicotine and vaping products that equals the total sales tax levied on tobacco products;
7. To require distributors of nicotine and vaping products to obtain a license and file quarterly returns;
8. To create the preschool programs cash fund for expanding the number of children in preschool and to require the general assembly to enact legislation for the administration of the cash fund;
9. To allow the programs funded by the tobacco education programs fund to also apply to nicotine and vaping products;
10. To create a tobacco products inventory tax;
11. To create a presumption that all charges included on an invoice of manufacturer or supplier are for the sale of tobacco products;
12. To define "delivery sale" for purposes of the cigarette tax;
13. To distribute the additional total revenue collected from the increased cigarette and tobacco products tax and the new nicotine and vaping products tax to the preschool programs cash fund, the tobacco tax cash fund, and the tobacco education programs fund;
14. Requiring state audits of the new revenue used for preschool programs; and
15. Authorizing the state to keep and spend all the revenue from the tax rate increases on cigarettes, tobacco products, and vaping and nicotine products as a voter approved revenue change.

Substantive Comments and Questions

There are no new substantive comments and questions.

Technical Comments

The following comments address technical issues raised by the form of the proposed initiative. These comments will be read aloud at the public meeting only if the proponents so request. You will have the opportunity to ask questions about these comments at the review and comment meeting. Please consider revising the proposed initiative as suggested below.

1. Proposed section 39-28.6-102 (7)(b) contains an incorrect citation that a "tobacco product is defined as in section 24-22-101(5)". Please correct.