

Tax All Tobacco Products Equally

75% of Maine Voters Support Tax Equalization.^{1*}

Don't Choose Tobacco Product Winners & Losers.

Close the Tobacco Tax Loophole. Tax All Tobacco Products Equally.

What Are Other Tobacco Products?

Any product that contains tobacco that does not meet the federal definition of a cigarette.

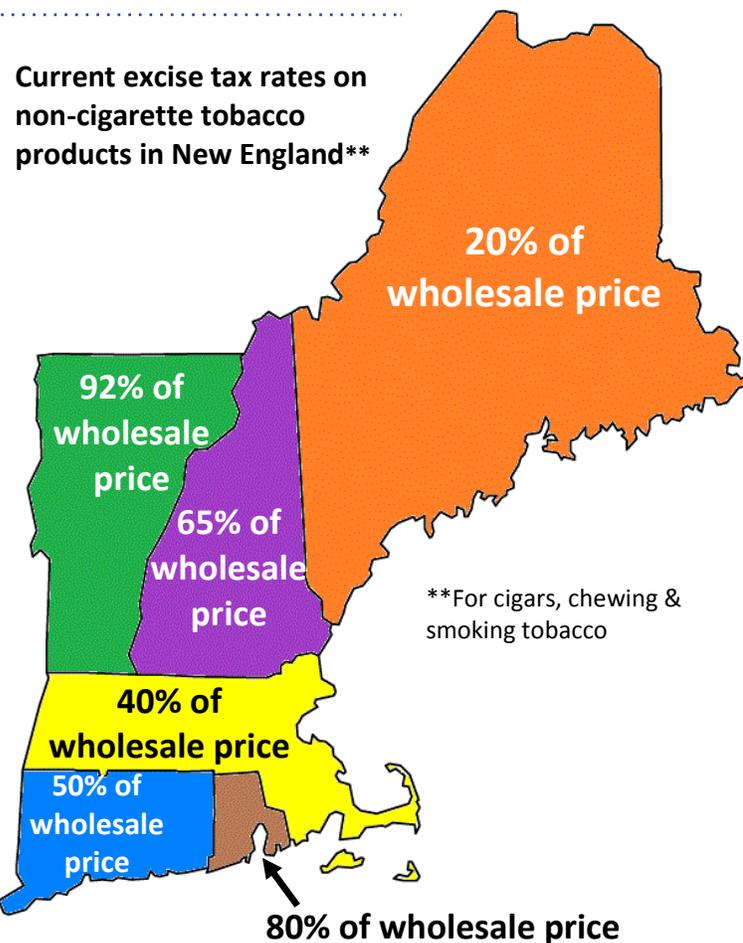
- E-Cigarettes
- Little Cigars/Cigarillos
- Chewing Tobacco/Snuff/Dip
- Loose Tobacco/RYO
- Cigars
- Dissolvables – orbs, sticks, strips, etc.

What Is Tax Equalization?

- Most Other Tobacco Products (OTPs) are not taxed at the same rate as a pack of cigarettes – making them much cheaper and increasing their appeal to youth and low-income Mainers.
- Some products retail for as little as \$1.00.
- **ME has the lowest OTP tax rate in New England.²**

Why Equalize?

- The tobacco industry uses tax loopholes to create new opportunities for youth and adults to use and become addicted to their products.^{3,4}
- **Tax loopholes for OTPs, like candy-flavored e-cigarettes and little cigars, are costing Maine nearly \$11 million per year in lost revenue.⁵**
- Young people are price-sensitive and disproportionately use OTPs compared to adults.
- In Maine, 1 in 10 male high school students smoke cigars; nearly 1 in 6 high school students use e-cigarettes.⁶
- More than 70% of Maine voters would be more likely to support a candidate for political office in Maine if the candidate voted to tax other tobacco products at the same rate as cigarettes.¹



**Participants in the poll were told that products like cigars, loose tobacco and e-cigarettes aren't currently taxed at the same rate as cigarettes, but if they were taxed similarly to cigarettes, the change could result in approximately \$10 million in additional revenue to the state. Seventy-five percent of respondents supported tax equalization if the additional tax revenue would be used to prevent youth from starting to smoke or use other tobacco products, such as e-cigarettes, Juuls, or other vaping products; as well if the revenue would be used to prevent illness and improve overall health.*

Other Tobacco Product Use Disparities

- The tobacco industry spends an estimated \$48.5 million each year in Maine on marketing,⁷ and has a history of targeting who they perceive as vulnerable populations – youth,⁸ low-income communities,^{9,10} LGBTQ,^{11,12} racial/ethnic minorities,¹³ and individuals with mental and/or behavioral health conditions.¹⁴
- Disproportionate use of tobacco products in these populations shows marketing works:
 - Gay high school males and high school males who are not sure of their sexual identity smoke cigars at significantly higher rates than their heterosexual peers.⁶
 - Transgender high school students smoke cigars and use e-cigarettes at significantly higher rates than their peers who do not identify as transgender.⁶
 - Hispanic high school students use e-cigarettes at significantly higher rates than their non-Hispanic peers.⁶

E-Cigarettes

- In Maine, E-cigarettes are only assessed sales tax.
- E-cigarettes are included in the FDA definition of tobacco products; they are not an FDA-approved quit aid, and are the most commonly used tobacco product among US youth.⁸
- **Youth who use e-cigarettes are 2 times more likely to start smoking cigarettes** within 2 years than youth who never used any tobacco product.¹⁵
- 99% of e-cigarettes contain nicotine, the highly addictive drug in cigarettes.¹⁶
- The U.S. Surgeon General and the former FDA Commissioner have both called youth e-cigarette use an epidemic.

To learn more, please visit www.MainePublicHealth.org.

¹ Maine Public Health Association. 2019. Voter Poll – Public Health Issues. Critical Insights.

² Orzechowski & Walker, *The Tax Burden on Tobacco, 2017*; press reports; state tax officials; U.S. Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau; USDA Economic Research Service.

³ Truth Initiative. 2019. The importance of tobacco taxes. <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/tobacco-prevention-efforts/importance-tobacco-taxes>

⁴ Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. 2013. Not your grandfather's cigar: A new generation of cheap and sweet cigars threatens a new generation of kids. https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/press-releases/2013_03_13_cigar

⁵ Maine Revenue Services. 2019.

⁶ Maine Department of Health and Human Services, and Maine Department of Education. 2018. Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey. <https://data.mainepublichealth.gov/miyhs/>

⁷ Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. 2019. The toll of tobacco in Maine. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/maine>

⁸ US Department of Health and Human Services. *E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health;2016.

⁹ Brown-Johnson CG, England LJ, Glantz SA, Ling PM. 2014. Tobacco Industry Marketing to Low Socioeconomic Status Women in the USA. *Tobacco Control*.

¹⁰ Truth Initiative. 2017. Tobacco is a social justice issue: Low-income communities. <https://truthinitiative.org/news/smoking-and-low-income-communities>

¹¹ American Lung Association. The LGBT Community: A Priority Population for Tobacco Control. Greenwood Village (CO): ALA, Smokefree Communities Project.

¹² Margolies L. 2015. The Same, Only Scariest—The LGBT Cancer Experience. American Cancer Society.

¹³ Truth Initiative. 2017. Tobacco is a social justice issue: Racial and ethnic minorities. <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/targeted-communities/tobacco-social-justice-issue-racial-and-ethnic-minorities>

¹⁴ U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vital Signs: Current cigarette smoking among adults aged ≥18 years with mental illness—United States, 2009–2011. *MMWR* 2013;62(05):81-7

¹⁵ Watkins SL, Glantz SA, Chaffee BW. Association of Noncigarette Tobacco Product Use with Future Cigarette Smoking Among Youth in the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health (PATH) Study, 2013-2015. *JAMA Pediatr*. 2018;172(2):181–187.

¹⁶ Marynak, K.L.; Gammon, D.G.; Rogers, T.; Coats, E.M.; Singh, T.; King, B.A. Sales of nicotine-containing electronic cigarette products: United States, 2015. *Am. J. of Pub. Hlth* 2017.