

Bills Committee on Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Bill 2019

Dear Mr. Kwok Wai-Keung,

I am writing to you to express my personal opinion and story regarding the Government's proposal to ban alternative tobacco products in Hong Kong.

Ever since I was young, I was aware that my father was a smoker. He picked up this habit sailing on ships (as it was quite a normal practice to do so). Growing up, this was a point of friction between my parents and was often the cause of arguments.

My family and I have now been living in Hong Kong since 2010, and it is only 2 years ago that my father quit smoking, when it was time for me to graduate from university. The quitting process for my father was a long and painful one, actually; not only for him, but our whole family. Nowadays, when there are reduced risk products in the market which provide other choices to smokers, I feel that a free market like Hong Kong should be one of the first places to advocate these types of products to replace cigarettes.

I may be a non-smoker, but I do know that the ban does not pave the way for a healthier Hong Kong, and forces smokers who find it hard to quit, to continue smoking cigarettes, which is the only option they have.

In summary, I'd like to propose the Government to NOT ban alternative tobacco products.

Please consider my view and thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Prahlad Chari