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BILL: House Bill 750  
TITLE: Public Schools – Electronic Smoking Devices – Policy and Disciplinary Standards  
DATE: March 3, 2016  
POSITION: OPPOSE  
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means  
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House Bill 750 requires the State Department of Education, after consultation with each local school system, to develop, on or before April 1, 2017, a specified model policy prohibiting the use of specified electronic smoking devices on school property, on school buses, and at school-sponsored events; requires that the model policy contain specified information; and requires specified county boards of education to establish specified policies prohibiting the use of electronic smoking devices at specified locations and specified events.

PSSAM appreciates the intent of Senate Bill 764. However, we respectfully **oppose** this bill.

PSSAM strongly believe that it is critical that locally-governed education policies and procedures remain under the authority of local boards of education. Each local school board must have the flexibility to develop individual student policies and practices that reflect the specific and diverse needs of their system.

On July 22, 2014, the Maryland State Board of Education adopted the revised Guidelines for a State Code of Conduct. The revision was part of a statewide effort to provide a framework for Maryland local school systems to use in establishing local codes of conduct and in developing new discipline-related policies. These guidelines include behavioral expectations for all members of the school community who have a direct impact on creating healthy teaching and learning environments and promoting student success. They also provide suggested prevention, intervention, restorative, and incentive-based strategies to respond to student misconduct, detailed explanations of specific student behaviors that are not permitted, and other factors for local districts to consider in revising their policies. The use of tobacco by students on school-related property is one of behaviors addressed in the revised Code of Conduct and the course of action to be taken is explicitly designed for prevention and treatment.

PSSAM believes that legislation related to electronic smoking on school-related property is not necessary. Again, we reiterate that it is critical that locally-governed education policies and procedures remain under the authority of local boards of education. In addition, local school systems have an excellent framework to follow in the Guidelines for a State Code of Conduct as described above.

Therefore, PSSAM respectfully **OPPOSES** House Bill 750 and requests an **unfavorable** committee report.