



FLAVOUR PETITION HITS 12,000 – PROMPTS GOV RESPONSE

- *E-LIQUID RESTRICTIONS WILL “PUSH USERS TO DANGEROUS BLACK MARKET”*
- *MORE CONSULTATION TO FOLLOW, SAYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH*

A PETITION to stop flavour restrictions proposed under the UK Tobacco and Vapes Bill has reached 12,000 signatures, prompting a government response with a promise for further public consultation.

The document states powers to ban certain sweet tasting e-liquids would “bring more harm, reversing smoking cessation progress and pushing users to dangerous black-market products”.

The petition, which was set up by Greig Fowler, director of the UK vape retailer VPZ, declares the government plans as part of the bill would “undermine efforts to help smokers quit”.

At the time of writing, more than 12,200 people had signed in seven weeks, with some of the highest response rates coming from Labour constituencies.

If any petition gathers more than 10,000 responses, government must respond. If it reaches 100,000, the issue must be considered for debate by parliament. The petition close date is September 7.

Responding to the petitioners, Wes Streeting’s Department of Health and Social Care said in a statement: “Further consultation will occur before introduction of any specific restrictions on vape flavours. To avoid unintended consequences on smoking rates, the any restrictions will be carefully considered.

“The Tobacco and Vapes Bill includes measures and powers that will reduce the appeal and availability of all vapes and other nicotine products to children. Amongst the regulation making powers is one that will enable government to introduce future limits on flavours.

“It is the Government’s view that restricting flavours that appeal to children has the potential to reduce the number of children who are vaping. There is no reason that flavours like “gummy bear” and “cotton candy” should be available, flavours like these are not necessary for smoking cessation purposes and overtly appeal to children.”

However, it acknowledged the important role flavours have played in helping smokers make the switch to less harmful vaping.

The response continued: “In considering the specific restrictions we bring forward, we are keenly aware that vaping is rightly used by adults as a tool to quit smoking. Vapes are less harmful than cigarettes, and vape flavours are an important consideration for adult smokers seeking to quit smoking.

“We are conscious of the need to avoid unintended consequences on adult smoking rates, and therefore the scope and impact of any restrictions will be carefully considered and weighed against evidence. That is why we will be consulting further on these measures as soon as possible after Royal Assent of the Tobacco and Vapes Bill, and we would invite people to submit their views and evidence for consideration as part of that process.”

Supporters of the petition said government had misjudged the appeal of flavours to adult smokers and called for vapers to respond.

Mark Oates, founder of Campaign Group We Vape, said: “Children should never vape, but it is not the government’s job to determine which flavours that appeal to many adults should be allowed. If someone likes the taste of cotton candy, then allow the flavour but change the name. What is being proposed is a step too far in controlling what people can and cannot do.

“[Research](#) shows up to 36% of adult vapers say they would return to smoking if flavoured vapes were banned. Government is in grave danger of undoing much of the good work achieved by harm reduction products like vapes by driving people away from them and either into the black market or back to cigarettes. It’s really important to respond to the petition and protect flavours from yet more government restrictions on a harm reduction tool that saves lives.”

In the petition, some of the largest areas of votes were cast from Labour constituencies.

Lowestoft, led by Jess Asat, produced 207 signatures, Sittingbourne and Sheppey, led by Kevin McKenna MP, 133 signatures and in North Ayrshire and Arran in Scotland, whose MP is Irene Campbell, 147 signatures.

In separate legislation, the disposables vape ban will come into force on June 1. However, research just released by University College London suggests prohibition may only have a "limited impact" on vaping rates.

It revealed the number of vapers between January 2024 and 2025 stalled in all adults over 16, after several years of significant growth.

The percentage of people aged 16-24 who mainly use disposable vapes has dropped by nearly half in the last year from 63% to 35%.

It means the ban may only have a "limited impact" on vaping as users switch to highly popular [“Big Puff”](#) reusable devices.

The government's enforcement readiness for the Bill and the disposables ban has also been ridiculed as "[pathetic](#)".

As well as restricting flavours, the Tobacco and Vapes Bill will ban all advertising and grant powers to control how vapes are displayed.

You can sign the flavours petition [here](#), before the September 7 deadline.

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