



Preserving Hookah Culture & Protecting Hookah Tradition across the USA

September 15, 2021

Letter From the President

Dear NHCA Member,

The NHCA has been working diligently to protect and preserve the rich cultural tradition of Hookah and have several noteworthy accomplishments and developments to report. I will first provide an update on new legislation on a federal, state and local level, then introduce our exciting new advocacy portal along with current campaigns, then touch on the upcoming Hookah Expo Worldwide (“HEW”) tradeshow in Las Vegas this coming October 8th and 9th, then finally invite our members to take action in the fight to save Hookah.

On the federal level, the Tobacco Tax Equity Act of 2021 has been reintroduced in both the House and Senate. The bill would increase taxes for many tobacco products for the first time since 2009. Hookah is heavily targeted by this legislation and would see a 1,650% federal tax increase. Such an increase would not only threaten the existence of the entire Hookah community but is also a disproportionately large tax increase on minority businesses and consumers. NHCA is working with a lobbying firm to oppose this tax increase. We ask all members of the Hookah community to go to Oppose Tobacco Tax Equity Act of 2021 to send a quick email to Congress opposing this exorbitant tax increase on Hookah.

This past year numerous states introduced legislation to ban Hookah and other flavored tobacco products, including CT, MD, NY, IL, HI, IN, OR, WA, VT, NM, TX, VA, D.C. NHCA engaged lobbyists in many of these states to advocate for Hookah and educate lawmakers about the 1,000-year cultural tradition of Hookah.

We are pleased to report that none of the proposed flavor bans passed except Washington D.C., which passed but exempted Hookah for onsite consumption and retail for onsite consumption. It is still unclear if the D.C. flavor ban will go into effect due to conditional



Preserving Hookah Culture & Protecting Hookah Tradition across the USA

provisions written into the bill. Although Hookah was saved in all these states, it is expected that these same bills will be reintroduced next year. With the support of its members, NHCA will be ready to fight to save Hookah across the United States.

On a local level, NHCA has recently engaged on several proposed city flavored tobacco bans including Pasadena, CA, La Verne, CA, and Denver, CO. NHCA attended and testified at proceedings for all city events and is proud to report that Pasadena flavor ban was tabled until new councilmembers could get more information on SB793 and Hookah. La Verne passed a flavored tobacco ban and exempted existing Hookah retailers. And we had a positive showing and representation at the Denver flavored tobacco ban stakeholder meeting. NHCA set up a save Hookah campaign and invited the Denver Hookah community to contact their representative to protect and preserve our right to practice our cultural tradition of Hookah and to date, over 500 emails have been sent to city councilmembers. Check it out here at [Save Hookah in Denver](#).

In other cities such as Los Angeles, we are awaiting the final ordinance language from the LA City Attorney's office. San Jose is set for September 28, 2021 where we anticipate a Hookah exemption that mirrors SB793.

NHCA has developed an advocacy site, www.saveHookah.com, to further our efforts to protect and preserve Hookah. Currently, we have a save Hookah campaign in Denver, San Jose and the federal Durbin Bill. This site will be instrumental as an educational home page for our multiple save Hookah campaigns. This is one of the many improvements NHCA has made to address the growing tide of legislation regarding Hookah. If you haven't already done so, please go to the site and send letters to all of the cities considering Hookah bans.

As **Hookah Expo Worldwide** (HEW) approaches this October 8th and 9th, 2021 in Las Vegas, Nevada, we invite the Hookah community to come to the NHCA booth #403 to learn more



Preserving Hookah Culture & Protecting Hookah Tradition across the USA

about recent legislative matters and how NHCA is working to further elevate and protect the Hookah industry.

The NHCA invites all Hookah manufacturers, distributors, retailers, lounges and enthusiasts to join us monthly for an NHCA update and discussion on the second Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m., the next meeting being October 13th at 1 p.m. via Zoom. Please use the following link to access the Zoom meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86835273178> or scan the QR code below

Lastly, we ask our members to spread the word about NHCA and encourage people to join at www.nationalHookah.com , scan the QR below. Follow us on Facebook and WhatsApp (**#saveHookah**) to get the latest news and updates. Together we can save Hookah.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arnie Abramyan". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Arnie Abramyan

NHCA President

NHCA Membership



NHCA Zoom Link

