

Imperial Brands plc
121 Winterstoke Road
Bristol
BS3 2LL

Wes Streeting MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

12th July 2024

Dear Secretary of State,

My name is [REDACTED] at Imperial Brands PLC, owner and manufacturer of next generation products including the pioneering vape brand, *blu*. Imperial Brands is a FTSE 100 company headquartered in Bristol. We have made a significant investment in our UK business and a material contribution to the country's economy and workforce.

Please accept my warmest congratulations on your appointment to Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, and successful re-election as MP for Ilford North. I very much look forward to working with you in your new role.

We welcomed your focus on tackling youth vaping during your time as Shadow Secretary of State for Health. We have long called for stronger vape regulation, and advocated for proportionate, effective, and evidence-based regulation in support of the UK's 'smokefree 2030' objective of reducing smoking prevalence to less than 5%.

I would be delighted to meet with you to discuss where Rishi Sunak's Tobacco and Vapes Bill could be strengthened and improved under a Labour Government.

We share your concerns regarding the rise in youth access to vapes - both the illicit devices sold by criminals, and compliant ones sold by rogue retailers to under-18s. Under the previous Conservative Government, we publicly called for better regulation, not less, to tackle the rise in this worrying trend. This includes the creation of a retailer licensing scheme, which would administer fines and revoke licences for those selling illegally to under-18s.

Additionally, we were among the first to call for the creation of an excise duty on vaping products to drive up industry standards - a proposal that will come into force under your Government in 2026. This issue is a priority for our business, and we look forward to working with a Labour Government to tackle it.

As was rightly acknowledged by the former Shadow Public Health Minister at the end of the last parliament, a balance must be struck between tackling youth vaping, and encouraging adult smokers to transition away from tobacco to potentially less harmful alternatives. According to Chief Medical Officer Sir Chris Whitty's last annual report, vaping contributes to between 50,000-70,000 successful smoking quits each year.

I hope providing the industry perspective on these issues has been helpful. I would welcome the opportunity to brief your team in more detail on the points outlined, and answer any questions you may have, if helpful.

I very much look forward to hearing from you and wish you all the best for your first few weeks in parliament.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature block]

Article 5.3 of the FCTC

The UK is a signatory to the WHO's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) treaty. Article 5.3 of the FCTC seeks to ensure that interactions between the tobacco industry and policymakers are "conducted transparently". It does not apply to interactions on vape regulation.

Imperial Brands plc is fully committed to all industry-Government interactions being transparent and accurate. The treaty, a subsequent European Court of Justice ruling, and the UK Government's own guidance on Article 5.3, do **not** warrant legitimate stakeholders being excluded from opportunities to contribute and consult on relevant regulations. It also does not preclude policymakers - elected or unelected - from engaging with parties with links to the tobacco industry. An open dialogue is crucial to help policymakers make objective recommendations, particularly on matters unrelated to public health.