



## ANATOMY OF THE FIRST VAPOR VICTORY IN D.C.

### HR 2058 IS NO LONGER AN OPTION

- Last year's attempt to change the predicate date by attaching a rider to the appropriations bill failed after public attention and unfavorable political dynamics led to the rider becoming "toxic" in the words of Leadership.
- When the appropriations rider failed in December 2015, the 2016 strategy had to be different.
- A "clean" predicate date bill was no longer an option, so with Rep. Cole we developed bi-partisan language.

### 2016 STEPS TO SUCCESS

- **Launch / Engage.** VTA officially launches and with West Front Strategies (WFS) hits Capitol Hill. VTA hires a D.C. public affairs team with extensive experience in changing the narrative and impacting complex votes on the Hill.
- **Change the Narrative.** VTA's Team immediately began delivering its message of the need for responsible industry standards coupled with a recognition of the enormous hope of vapor products. At the same time, we responded to faulty and misleading stories about our industry.
- **Build the Coalition.** VTA understood that there were more allies out there that had never been engaged on our issues. VTA reached out to groups with great respect on Capitol Hill to share our common concerns with the pending FDA regulations. That effort helped add at least a dozen new voices who have spoken out against the impropriety of the FDA's proposed regulations and the importance of changing the predicate date.
- **Create Bi-Partisan Support.** We understood the importance of bipartisan support for changing the predicate date, and developed a plan to achieve it. Understanding the key concerns raised by Members of Congress and the traditional opponents of vapor, we advocated for language that specifically addressed those concerns.
- **Work with Leadership.** VTA's team at West Front Strategies worked with House Leadership and their staff to impress the importance of changing the predicate date while making the first attempt to regulate vapor products in a manner that protects our growing industry and protects the public.
- **Execute.** Between April 11-17, 2016, more than 30 meetings were conducted with House Appropriations Committee Members, and focused public policy messages were delivered in key districts. On the morning of April 18, 2016, VTA issued its industry Call to Action. We also worked with numerous advocacy groups exchanging information on which committee members needed to be called. By the evening of April 18, 2016, a full committee roll call had been completed and we had a good feeling about the next day's vote.
- **Win #1!** April 19, 2016 marked the first vapor victory in Washington D.C. Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK) and Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA) co-sponsored an amendment to change the predicate date and save thousands of small vapor businesses. 5 Republicans and 2 Democrats rose in favor of the change and spoke about vapor harm reduction and the need to protect small vapor businesses. The House Appropriations Committee voted 31-19 to adopt Rep. Cole's and Rep. Bishop's amendment and save vapor.
- **Thank you!** While we worked hard to achieve this milestone, **we certainly did not take this first step alone.** A special thanks goes to consumer group CASAA, industry groups Georgia Smoke Free Association, Ohio Smoke Free Association, Tennessee Smoke Free Association, Utah Smoke Free Association, Texas E-Cigarette and Vapor Association, and veterans' group Vape A Vet, for working with us, delivering a great message, and helping to secure key votes on changing the predicate date. We have a long way to go, but this was a critical first step.