

Tobacco and Vapes Bill - Final Reading Summary:

Date: Monday, 23 March 2026

Location: House of Commons Chamber

Summary

Monday 23 March saw the final reading of the Tobacco and Vapes Bill, in which the House of Commons formally approved the House of Lords' amendments with MPs debating the role of secondary legislation and methods of enforcement, rather than the morality or necessity of the bill itself.

The debate saw MPs from across the House agreeing on the importance of a 'smoke-free generation', as well as emphasising the importance of enforcement of illicit sales and concerns regarding the illiberal nature of the bill.

While there were no explicit mentions of the UKVIA, it is clear that our briefings have influenced the speeches of some members, as is outlined in greater detail below.

Outcome

The debate was completed within one and a half hours, with all amendments being approved without division as the shadow front bench claimed that all parties agreed on the principal of eradicating smoking, whilst differing instead on the means of achieving.

Sharon Hodgson MP, the new Health Minister taking the bill through the Commons, used this debate as an opportunity to set out the Government's position regarding the amendments. A summary of these comments can be seen at the end of this briefing.

Key attendees and notable contributions

The debate was attended by a selection of MPs from across the House, with the most notable contributions coming from Euan Stainbank MP (Labour), Mary Kelly Foy MP (Labour), Mary Glindon MP (Labour), Danny Chambers MP (Liberal Democrat), as well as an impassioned speech from Jack Rankin MP (Conservative) opposing the bill.

Euan Stainbank:

- Welcomed the bill and paid tribute to the previous Minister, Ashley Dalton MP.
- Asked the Minister to commit to the importance of vape flavours for quitting (referencing a UKVIA point).
- Spoke of the importance in distinguishing between illicit retailers and specialist retailers who play an important role in stopping smoking.
- Asked for further information on how the Government intends to enforce and regulate illicit sales.
- Raised storage issues following fire in Glasgow.

Mary Kelly Foy:

- Spoke of the importance for the vaping industry to balance the reduction of youth appeal whilst being an attractive alternative to smokers.
- Claimed most amendments were technical, e.g. banning vape vending machines.
- Thanked Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) and Fresh for their work to achieve a smokefree future.

Mary Glindon:

- Quoted a UKVIA statistic (without referencing the organisation directly) about how 4 in 10 adult smokers believe vaping is as or more harmful than smoking and recognised this as alarming.
- Asked the Minister to confirm what metrics the Government will use to judge success in reducing youth vaping, a UKVIA suggested question).

Danny Chambers:

- Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Mental Health.
- Said he was pleased that the Government had accepted the Lords' amendments made by the Lib Dems regarding the funds from fines being given to local authorities, rather than to the Exchequer.
- Endorsed the regulation on vending machines and filters.

Jack Rankin:

- Disagrees with 'socialist bill on principle' and claims that it had not been properly scrutinised.
- Believes it is illiberal and will create two tiers of adults through the generational smokefree regulation, which would be difficult to enforce.
- Urged government to listen to high street retailers like corner shops and convenience stores, who will be affected and potentially closed as a consequence of the generational ban: 7,680 projected store closures, resulting in 70,000 jobs lost and costing retailers £6.52 billion (projected figures on impact of generational tobacco ban on stores - Government Impact Assessment for the Tobacco and Vapes Bill <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6985eeb7cfe7ccf77efbc74e/tobacco-and-vapes-bill-impact-assessment.pdf>)

Ministerial comments

- The Minister thanked all contributions throughout the Bill, as well as the work of former Ministers.
- Commented on how smoking is currently the leading cause of preventable death in the UK and how greater enforcement is needed to reduce illicit trade.
- Said the Government does not believe in introducing a bespoke levy.
- Committed to banning advertising for nicotine patches.
- Critiqued Jack Rankin's argument in favour of giving people 'freedom to be addicted', stating that the majority of smokers regret starting.
- Recognised the importance of flavours and approved of their use in a regulated format
- The Bill will apply to Northern Ireland.
- Secondary regulation will be determined by evidence, particularly with regard to filters, which will be subject to 'appropriate levels of parliamentary scrutiny'.
- Claimed that despite opposition to the principle of the Bill, all parliamentarians are in favour of preventing black market trading.
- She judged that the success of the Bill will be measured by an evident reduction of smokers, both young and old.