

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 3, 2026

The Honorable Scott Bessent
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

The Honorable Jamieson Greer
United States Trade Representative
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th St., NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Secretary Bessent and Ambassador Greer,

We write to draw your attention to the growing risks associated with the massive volumes of illicit Chinese e-cigarettes flooding into the United States. We fully support President Trump's aggressive, multi-agency enforcement actions taken to confront this pressing threat as addressing illegal activity of this magnitude and consequence requires a comprehensive strategy and response. Accordingly, we respectfully urge the Treasury Department and the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to take appropriate action within their respective authorities.

The Chinese Communist Party, through China's State Tobacco Monopoly Administration (STMA), exports hundreds of millions of illegal e-cigarettes to the United States each year, flooding the domestic market, and generating billions of dollars in revenue. The proceeds generated by STMA may be helping to fund military or technological initiatives designed to undermine American economic and strategic interests. Federal agencies have also linked Chinese manufacturers to Mexican cartels and money laundering operations. Earlier this year, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) reported that illicit Chinese e-cigarettes are being used as part of a trade-based money laundering scheme to move fentanyl proceeds on behalf of Mexican cartels.

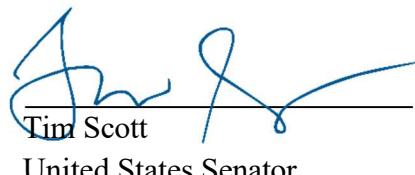
The Department of Justice and Drug Enforcement Agency have also connected the proliferation of e-cigarettes smuggled into the United States to retailers operated by foreign nationals near schools and military installations. Additionally, highly sophisticated "smart vapes," with the ability to connect to user's cellphones, have become commonplace. These devices have the capacity to initiate data breaches or malware infections and can also access and collect sensitive user data. Given the interconnected relationship between Chinese industry and state intelligence services, the targeting of U.S. military personnel with these devices raises profound national security concerns.

Given the scale and severity of this threat, we urge the Treasury Department and USTR to use their respective enforcement and diplomatic authorities to combat illegal Chinese e-cigarettes. Whether tackling money laundering operations via FinCEN or negotiating directly with Chinese leaders to prevent future shipments of illegal e-cigarettes, your leadership is necessary to help curtail this growing security risk. We appreciate your consideration and are ready to assist.

Sincerely,



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Tim Scott
United States Senator

Ashley Moody

Ashley Moody
United States Senator

Thom Tillis

Thom Tillis
United States Senator

Marsha Blackburn

Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator

Ted Budd

Ted Budd
United States Senator

Tim Sheehy

Tim Sheehy
United States Senator

Tom Cotton

Tom Cotton
United States Senator

Tommy Tuberville

Tommy Tuberville
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Katie Boyd Britt

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Jim Banks

Jim Banks
United States Senator

Eric S. Schmitt

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United States Senator