



Outlook for 2008 Virginia General Assembly

The 2008 session of the Virginia General Assembly begins on January 9, with the premium cigar retail establishments of Virginia and their patrons being threatened as never before. Fresh off the heels of the industry having to fight an unprecedented level of proposed federal taxation on cigars, the state level now proposes another attempt to prevent cigar enthusiasts from around Virginia from enjoying a fine cigar.

Governor Tim Kaine has become the first governor in Virginia history to support an across the board smoking ban in all Virginia restaurants and bars, including private clubs. In addition, numerous legislators from both the Democrat and Republican Party will be filing varying versions of a smoking ban. All such bills must be filed by January 18.

The Cigar Association of Virginia is a member of a broad based business coalition that will be working to defeat such legislation. In 2007, this coalition came together to defeat the Governor's attempt in the April 2007 Veto Session to amend legislation passed during the regular session. This year, we enter the legislative session with that coalition of support.

The group includes the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Virginia Retail Merchants Association, Virginia Farm Bureau, Virginia Agribusiness Council, Virginia Manufacturers Association, Virginia Petroleum and Convenience Store Operators, RJR and Philip Morris, and the cornerstone member - the Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association. We will keep you informed of others that join this diverse pro-business coalition.

The Cigar Association of Virginia will also be monitoring any attempt to alter taxation at the state-level during the 2008 General Assembly, and other measures that can impact the tobacco regulatory environment.

The customers, the employees, and the business owners of retail tobacco shops are extremely vital in defending the right for people to enjoy cigars in Virginia. It is imperative that we voice an opinion to our legislators expressing our concerns. Please spread the word to all cigar enthusiasts that our rights are again being attacked in Virginia, and ask them to take the time to contact their legislators.

Join the CAV today and stay up-to-date on developments by visiting www.savemycigar.org.

Thanks for all the support,

The Cigar Association of Virginia
www.savemycigar.org

Cigar Association of Virginia - Protecting Your Rights to Enjoy Cigars!