

# **Tobacco Bill Postponement** **Unacceptable, Betrayal Of** **Public Trust — MMA**

By CodeBlue | 10 October 2023

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Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz. Photo courtesy of MMA.

The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) voices profound dismay over the abrupt delay in the second reading of the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Bill 2023, originally set for today.

When pivotal health measures are deferred for “other government business”, it begs the question: where does public health stand in the government’s list of priorities?

We were initially hopeful about the government’s commitment to pass this crucial bill, but recent decisions, like removing liquid and gel nicotine from the Poisons Act earlier this year and the current postponement, have seriously eroded our confidence in their dedication to this legislation.

The Ministry of Health’s decision to disregard expert advice against removing nicotine from the Poisons Act before introducing the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Bill 2023 raises serious concerns.

As it stands, the vape industry remains unchecked, and with nicotine’s exemption from the Poisons Act, vaping products, including those containing nicotine, are accessible to children of all ages. This is an alarming situation that no responsible government should permit.

*Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz is president of the Malaysian Medical Association.*