



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Public Health Committee

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House Bill 5219 – An Act Prohibiting the Use of Electronic Cigarettes in Schools

The Department of Public Health (DPH) supports HouseBill # 5219. House Bill 5219 would expand the current smoking restrictions in the clean indoor air act by prohibiting the use of an electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS) within a school building. Prohibiting the use of ENDS will help to curtail the exposure of Connecticut youth to these devices, and help to prevent their initiation to using these products that may result in a long-term subsequent addiction to tobacco products.

Electronic cigarettes and other ENDS are currently not regulated, so there are no manufacturing standards and no ingredient disclosure requirements. In addition, there is now evidence that carcinogens have been found in both the mainstream smoke (aerosol) that is inhaled by the user as well as the secondhand smoke that is shared with anyone nearby. Research has determined that electronic nicotine delivery systems produce an aerosol that has a high concentration of nicotine and contains hazardous ultrafine particles which are poisonous and known to cause cancer. This aerosol of liquid contains sub-micron droplets consisting of glycols, nicotine, and other chemicals, some of which are carcinogenic (e.g., benzene, formaldehyde, toluene, and metals like cadmium, lead, & nickel)¹. This can have a profound negative impact on safety and public health.

The use of these devices is on the rise: from 2011-2013, current ENDS use more than doubled among our high school students, and 5.3% of Connecticut youth report use of electronic cigarettes. In 2013, 3.1% of middle school students and 19.5% of high school students currently use tobacco products, including cigarettes, cigars, hookah, and ENDS.²

According to the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the national standard-setting body for indoor air quality, including ventilation, electronic nicotine delivery systems emit harmful chemicals into the air and need to be regulated in the same manner as tobacco smoke³. Researchers at Roswell Park Cancer Institute also concluded that there is a risk to third hand nicotine and other chemical exposures due to aerosol deposits that collect on indoor surfaces⁴.

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The e-liquid used in the electronic nicotine delivery systems pose a poisoning risk due to the possibility of high nicotine concentration. Nicotine is an acute toxin, particularly to young children; swallowing or contact with the skin can result in nausea and vomiting, as well as respiratory arrest, seizures, or even death.⁵

The tobacco industry has marketed these products toward youth; offering the e-liquid in over 7,000 youth appealing fruit and candy flavors that can easily be ingested orally without the use of the device itself, causing significant harm.

Adopting policies that lessen the risk of these exposures makes good public health sense, and this is another step we can take to protect Connecticut youth. Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

1. Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights. *Electronic Smoking Devices and Secondhand Aerosol*. 2014. Available at no-smoke.org.
2. Connecticut Department of Public Health; 2013 CT Youth Tobacco Survey
3. Offermann, Bud. *The Hazards of E-Cigarettes*. ASHRAE Journal, June 2014. http://bookstore.ashrae.biz/journal/download.php?file=2014June_038-047_IAQ_Offerman_rev.pdf
4. Goniewicz, M.L.; Lee, L., "Electronic Cigarettes are a Source of Thirdhand Exposure to Nicotine," Oxford University Press on behalf of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco; Nicotine Tob Res (2014) doi: 10.1093/ntr/ntu152 First published online: August 30, 2014
5. Tobacco Control Legal Consortium. *Electronic Cigarette Liquid Packaging and Sales Requirement.Fact Sheet*. September 2014. www.publichealthlawcenter.org