

**March 2, 2016**

**Testimony of the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health in support of SB 290: An Act Concerning the Sale and Purchase of Tobacco Products, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems and Vapor Products and Signage Concerning the Use of Such Products and Systems.**

The Connecticut Association of Directors of Health (CADH), comprised of Connecticut's local health directors, works to strengthen public health throughout the state. To that end, we write in support SB 290.

Tobacco use remains the number one cause of preventable illness and death in the United States. Cigarette smoking is responsible for 1 in 5 of all deaths each year. The smoking of electronic cigarettes is also on the rise, and a January 2015 article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* entitled "**Hidden Formaldehyde in E-Cigarette Aerosols,**" suggests that electronic cigarettes (not FDA regulated) may be as harmful to health as tobacco smoking products. Both tobacco and aerosol smoking products expose the user to harmful carcinogens.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Nearly 9 out of 10 cigarette smokers first tried smoking by age 18. By increasing the minimum age for the purchase of tobacco and non-medicinal nicotine delivery products, this bill represents another opportunity for Connecticut to be a leader in public health, which is about *preventing* the costly and potentially disastrous health ailments that can arise from tobacco and electronic cigarette use. These costs include excess health care costs and costs in lost productivity. This bill has the potential to decrease smoking related morbidity in youth as well as the health care costs associated with adolescent onset smoking.