

**Testimony of
Environment and Human Health, Inc.
By
Nancy Alderman, President**

Bill 7200

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE SALE OF CIGARETTES, TOBACCO PRODUCTS, ELECTRONIC NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND VAPOR PRODUCTS TO PERSONS UNDER AGE TWENTY-ONE.

To the Chairman of the Public Health Committee, Senator Mary Abrams, Representative Jonathan Steinberg, Ranking Members Senator Somers and Representative Petit, Vice Chairs Senator Lesser and Representative Young and Members of the Committee:

Environment and Human Health, Inc. is in strong support of

Bill 7200

It is critically important to keep all tobacco products out of the hands of those under the age of 21. Although campaigns to teach children not to smoke regular cigarettes has reached many teenagers -- electronic cigarette vaping has not -- and it is now an epidemic.

Electronic-cigarettes are delivery systems for the highly addictive drug nicotine. They consist of battery-operated devices with a heating element that vaporizes liquid nicotine. This solution turns into a mist that people inhale or "vape." The nicotine solution includes other chemicals, such as formaldehyde and acrolein which can cause irreversible lung damage.

The Connecticut Mirror has reported that The Connecticut State Department of Public Health (DPH) released the Youth Tobacco Survey results.

This research showed that high school students' vaping doubled from 7.2 percent in 2015 to 14.7 percent in 2017. This health risk to Connecticut's youth has reached epidemic proportions.

A recent study highlighted the potential dangers of using electronic cigarettes, or "vaping." It showed that Los Angeles high school students who vaped were more likely to start smoking conventional cigarettes than were kids who didn't. Now, a second study comes to a similar conclusion.

Brian Primack is a doctor and researcher at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine in Pennsylvania. He led the new study. He and his colleagues followed nearly 700 people from the United States for a year. All were 16 to 26 years old at the start of the study. And as with the L.A. study, he notes, the new one

showed "young people who use e-cigarettes are more likely than [non-vapers] to progress to regular cigarette smoking."

But unlike the earlier study, the new one recruited only people "who said they were not interested at all in cigarette smoking," he notes. Indeed, to be included in the study, each had to have said he or she "definitely" had no intention of smoking in the next year. All also said they'd refuse to try a cigarette if offered one by a friend.

Over the course of the next year, though, some of the participants did start to smoke. And those who had been vaping before the study began took up smoking at a much higher rate. The study's findings appeared online September 8 in JAMA Pediatrics.

The new study was small. Even smaller was the number of vapers at the start: 16 people. Yet 11 of them changed their minds about avoiding cigarettes over the course of the year. That's at least three and a half times the rate seen among the nonvapers.

Six of the vapers (37.5 percent) started smoking tobacco cigarettes. That's nearly four times the percentage seen among the non-vapers.

Studies have shown that e-cigarettes can help some tobacco give up using conventional cigarettes. But for nonsmokers, Primack's group says, e-cigarettes may do the opposite: They might "contribute to the development of a new population of cigarette smokers."

Nicotine is an addictive stimulant in tobacco. It's what keeps smokers coming back for more. Vaping also delivers nicotine but more slowly. As such, Primack's team says, e-cigarettes "may serve as a 'nicotine starter,'" for young people. A new user can then advance to cigarette smoking after any initial adverse effects become tolerable.

Despite the study's small size, its authors emphasize that "we found consistently significant results." That means the results were strong enough to suggest they were not due to chance.

The new study provides strong "evidence that e-cigarette use leads to smoking, most likely owing to nicotine addiction," says Jonathan Klein. A doctor, he works for the American Academy of Pediatrics, based in Elk Grove Village, Ill.

He wrote a commentary that appears with the new study. He argues that it's now time to "act on the evidence." What type of action? The U.S. Food and Drug Administration needs to assert its authority over vaping products, he says. That means regulating e-cigs to keep them out of the hands of minors.

Thank you for your attention,

Nancy Alderman, President
Environment and Human Health, Inc.
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