



1224 Mill St., BLDG B, Suite 223
East Berlin, CT. 06023
203-238-1207
FAX (203) 238-3437
www.ctnurses.org

Public Health Committee Public Hearing

March 4th, 2019

Testimony: **H.B. 7200 AN ACT PROHIBITING THE SALE OF CIGARETTES, TOBACCO PRODUCTS, ELECTRONIC NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND VAPOR PRODUCTS TO PERSONS UNDER AGE TWENTY-ONE**

Good Morning: Representative Steinberg, Senator Abrams, Ranking Member Petit, Ranking Member Somers and honorable members of the Public Health Committee, I want to thank-you for the opportunity to provide testimony on *H.B. 7200 An Act Prohibiting the Sale of Cigarettes, Tobacco Products, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems and Vapor Products to Persons Under Age Twenty-One* on behalf of the Connecticut Nurses' Association (CNA). I am Mary Jane Williams Ph.D., RN current chairperson of Government Relations Committee for the Connecticut Nurses Association.

Cigarettes, Tobacco Products, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems Harm Health

The American Cancer Society states “[c]ombustible tobacco products, primarily cigarettes, are the single greatest cause of cancer and kill about 7 million people worldwide each year. In the United States, 98% of all tobacco-related deaths are caused by cigarette smoking.” Over the past few years, millions of Americans have switched to

using electronic nicotine delivery systems and vapor products. While electronic nicotine devices are considered less harmful than tobacco products, the health effects of long-term use are not yet known. As a result, the American Cancer Society's policy statement recommends policies "known to prevent the initiation and use of all tobacco products, including appropriate taxation, retail policies (e.g., raising the minimum age of purchase to 21), tobacco and e-cigarette aerosol-free policies and funding of evidence-based prevention and cessation programs." The ACS strongly recommends that every effort be made to prevent the initiation of e-cigarettes by youth, stating that the "use of products containing nicotine in any form among youth is unsafe and can harm brain development."¹ Young e-cigarette users are at increased risk for both starting to smoke and becoming long-term users of combustible tobacco products, according to the ACS.

The Connecticut Nurses Association supports measures to protect public health. Children under twenty-one years of age are particularly vulnerable to the harms associated with using tobacco and nicotine delivery products. Prohibiting the sale of these products for persons under twenty-one years of age is sound public health policy.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jane M Williams RN, PhD., Chair of Government Relations,
CT Nurses Association
Professor Emeritus, Central Connecticut State University

¹ <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/e-cigarette-position-statement.html>