



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Public Health Committee

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House Bill No. 6488, An Act Concerning Cigarettes, Tobacco Products, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems and Vapor Products

The Department of Public Health (DPH) thanks the committee for the opportunity to provide information on HB 6488, An Act Concerning Cigarettes, Tobacco Products, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems and Vapor Products.

Ban On The Sale Of Flavored Cigarettes, Tobacco Products, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems And Vapor Products

A ban on the sale of flavored cigarettes, tobacco productions, electronic cigarettes, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) and vapor products will reduce the use of such products across all populations, but particularly in children. A report published in 2015 and confirmed in 2019 stated that over three quarters of youth surveyed started using tobacco with a flavored product.² We know that adolescent brains are particularly vulnerable to nicotine and nicotine addiction, and that many young people are not aware that most ENDS contain nicotine.^{3,4} A 2019 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report encourages states to prohibit the sale of flavored tobacco products to stem the increase in youth tobacco use.⁵ Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island have restricted the sale of flavored tobacco products.⁶

Historically, flavoring agents were added to tobacco products to mask the harsh flavor of tobacco and to attract the interest of young people.⁷ The long-term health consequences of vaping are not yet fully known. Although flavorings have been tested as safe for ingestion, they have not been fully tested for inhalation safety, and studies show that some flavors contain chemicals known to irritate the respiratory system.⁸ In the fall of 2019, JUUL Labs, maker of the popular JUUL device, stopped selling their flavored products apart from mint/menthol and tobacco flavors. Although their sales dropped overall, their sales of mint/menthol flavor rapidly increased as youth transitioned from fruity to mint/menthol flavorings.⁹

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In February 2020, the Food and Drug Administration banned flavored cartridges and pods, but did not include cigars, e-liquids, or disposable products.¹⁰ This confuses retailers and purchasers and leaves a large array of flavored products available.

Ban on Smoking in a Motor Vehicle When a Minor is Present

DPH supports a ban on smoking or the use of an electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product in a motor vehicle when a minor is present because there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.¹¹ To align with Connecticut's tobacco age requirements, the committee may want to consider defining 'minor' as an individual under twenty-one years of age. Smoke and vape-free motor vehicle policies would help reduce exposure to both second- and third-hand smoke and aerosol by anyone driving or riding in a motor vehicle and would aid in protecting them from its harmful health effects.¹² The following states currently have smoke free car laws: Arkansas, California, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia.¹³

Thank you for your consideration of this information. DPH encourages committee members to reach out with any questions.

References:

¹ Statement from (now former) FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, M.D., September 2018. Accessible via <https://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm625884.htm>.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, "VitalSigns: Tobacco Use by Youth is Rising; E-Cigarettes are the main reason", February 2019. Available at www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/youth-tobacco-use

³ Ambrose, et al, Journal of the American Medical Association: "Flavored Tobacco Product Use Among US Youth Aged 12-17 Years, 2013-2014" 2015, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration, Data Add to the Evidence Base that Flavored Tobacco Products May Attract Young Users; available at <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/research/path-study-findings-give-insight-flavored-tobacco-health-effects-e-cigarettes-and-adult-use-cigars#references>

⁴ Yuan, et al, The Journal of Physiology: Neuroscience, Nicotine and the Adolescent Brain, 2015. Accessible via <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1113/JP270492/epdf>

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, "VitalSigns: Tobacco Use by Youth is Rising; E-Cigarettes are the main reason", February 2019. Available at www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/youth-tobacco-use

⁶ Tobacco Free Kids, "Ending the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products", December 2022. Available at <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/us/flavored-tobacco-products>

⁷ Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "E-Cigarette Use among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General" 2016.

⁸ Park, et al; (*Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health*), Scientific Reports; "Transcriptomic response of primary human airway epithelial cells to flavoring chemicals in electronic cigarettes." February 1, 2019; and Tierney, et al; BMJ Journal of Tobacco Control, "Flavour chemicals in electronic cigarette fluids", 2016.

⁹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report "E-Cigarette Use Among Middle and High School Students-United States, 2020." MMWR 2020;69:1310-1312. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/pdfs/mm6937e1-H.pdf>

¹⁰ Food and Drug Administration, Center for Tobacco Products "Enforcement Priorities for Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) and Other Deemed Products on the Market Without Premarket Authorization (Revised)". Updated April 2020.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National

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Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health. Retrieved from:

http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/secondhand_smoke/general_facts/

¹²Nabi-Burza et al. Parents Smoking in Their Cars With Children Present. American Academy of Pediatrics V 130 (6). December 2012. www.pediatrics.org/cgi/doi/10.1542/peds.2012-0334 doi:10.1542/peds.2012-0334

¹³American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation, "Secondhand Smoke Exposure in Cars". Available at <https://no-smoke.org/at-risk-places/cars/>

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