

From: Patricia McDaniel <>

Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 10:34 AM

To: Clerk <clerk@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: September 8 city council meeting, agenda item 17, e-cigarette and flavored tobacco product regulations

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council,

I am a researcher at the University of California, San Francisco, who specializes in tobacco control. I am also a resident of San Mateo. I'm writing to encourage you to follow in San Mateo County's footsteps and adopt a strong ordinance that would prohibit the sale of flavored tobacco products, e-cigarettes and vaping devices, as well as tobacco sales in pharmacies.

Although the Governor recently signed SB793, which imposes some statewide restrictions on the sale of flavored tobacco products, RJ Reynolds has already filed paperwork to start the process to put the legislation on hold until the 2022 ballot via referendum. That means that if they collect the 620,00 plus signatures required by the end of November, the bill will not be implemented and California youth will remain at risk. It is vital that cities continue to pass their own e-cigarette restrictions without exemptions.

In 2018, the County prohibited the sale of flavored tobacco and e-cigarette products; however, two years later, the County imposed a ban on the sale of all e-cigarettes, citing continued access to e-cigarettes by youth, and the failure of the Food and Drug Administration to analyze their safety and alleged benefit. The County noted that it was "not content to continue to wait before addressing, for its residents, what appears from the evidence to be a major public health crisis." The City of San Mateo should also not be content to wait.

Flavored tobacco products are one of the biggest current challenges we face in protecting kids against the harms of tobacco use. In general, flavors are very attractive to youth, improving the taste and reducing the harshness of tobacco products (1). 81% of youth aged 12-17 who have ever used a tobacco product started with a flavored product (2). Flavors have also been singled out as the primary reason that e-cigarettes are so popular among youth (3). Once adolescents and young adults begin using e-cigarettes, they are more likely than non-users to transition to smoking combustible cigarettes (4).

A ban on tobacco sales in pharmacies also makes sense when trying to protect youth, since it will reduce their exposure to point of sale tobacco and e-cigarette marketing and eliminate a source of cheap tobacco products. We know that price is one of the key determinants of tobacco use, and research in California has found that the cheapest cigarettes cost significantly less in pharmacies than other stores (5). Tobacco-free pharmacies will better promote public health by eliminating the paradox of cheap prices and promotions for cigarettes in a retail environment where consumers seek smoking cessation aids and other health remedies.

Thank you for taking on this important public health issue.

Sincerely,

Patricia McDaniel, PhD.
University of California San Francisco
Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences

1. US Department of Health and Human Services. Preventing tobacco use among youth and young adults: a report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion US Office of Smoking and Health; 2012. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK99237/>.
2. Ambrose BK, Day HR, Rostron B, Conway KP, Borek N, Hyland A, et al. Flavored Tobacco Product Use Among US Youth Aged 12-17 Years, 2013-2014. JAMA. 2015;314(17):1871-3.
3. Cullen KA, Liu ST, Bernat JK, Slavutich WI, Tynan MA, King BA, et al. Flavored Tobacco Product Use Among Middle and High School Students - United States, 2014-2018. MMWR Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report. 2019;68(39):839-44.
4. Soneji S, Barrington-Trimis JL, Wills TA, Leventhal AM, Unger JB, Gibson LA, et al. Association Between Initial Use of e-Cigarettes and Subsequent Cigarette Smoking Among Adolescents and Young Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. JAMA Pediatrics. 2017;171(8):788-97.
5. Henriksen, L., et al. Prices for Tobacco and Nontobacco Products in Pharmacies Versus Other Stores: Results from Retail Marketing Surveillance in California and in the United States. American Journal of Public Health. 2016 October; 106(10): 1858–1864.