



April 2, 2015

Senator Leno
State Capitol, Room 5100
Sacramento, CA 95814
VIA FAX: 916-651-4911

Re: SB 140 (Leno) E-Cigarettes
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Senator Leno,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California, representing the 5,000 board-certified pediatrician members of all four California AAP regional chapters statewide (Ch 1 – Northern California, Ch 2 – Greater Los Angeles, Ch 3 – San Diego, and Ch 4 – Orange County), strongly supports your proposed legislation SB 140. This bill would expand the definition of tobacco products under the Stop Tobacco Access to Kids Enforcement (STAKE) Act to include electronic devices in order to restrict the sale of electronic cigarettes to minors.

E-cigarettes, also called Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), present another way for smokers to ingest nicotine and are increasingly being marketed to young adults and adolescents. E-cigarettes are touted as a “safer” alternative to smoking, and a way to either quit smoking cigarettes, or to smoke in places where cigarette smoking is not allowed. However, these products are not regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and no rigorous scientific studies have shown that they are safe for use. Until the FDA makes definitive federal regulations on their marketing and use, the burden of regulation rests on individual states to restrict purchase by minors.

Because the marketing and product requirements of e-cigarettes are not currently regulated, there are no standards for product manufacturing or safety. The amount of nicotine in a cartridge can vary widely between brands because of this lack of regulation. The chemical compounds in an e-cigarette can also vary between brands. Potentially harmful constituents have been documented in e-cigarette cartridges, including diethylene glycol, genotoxins, and animal carcinogens.

E-cigarette cartridges are available in a variety of youth-targeted flavors like peach schnapps, java jolt, piña colada, peppermint, and chocolate. These flavors have been banned in traditional cigarettes since they have been shown to entice children. Since 80% of tobacco users started using tobacco products before 18 years of age, this targeted marketing to youth can have dangerous consequences.

Use of e-cigarettes by youth is on the rise: Use of e-cigarettes among high school and middle school students doubled from 2011 to 2012, with an estimated 1.8 million students reporting they’ve tried the device, according to 2013 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data.

Recent data from the federal government confirms pediatricians' concerns about e-cigarettes and their liquid nicotine refills: they are poisoning children at an alarming rate.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) new findings, calls to poison control centers related to e-cigarette exposure increased from one per month four years ago to 215 per month as of February 2014.

The STAKE Act currently prohibits an individual from selling or otherwise furnishing tobacco products to minors, as well as prohibiting the smoking of cigarettes and other tobacco products in specified areas. SB 140 bill is an essential step to ensure that these same restrictions that keep minors away from tobacco products be extended to protect them from electronic cigarettes, as well.

The AAP-CA strongly supports SB 140 and commends your efforts to promote the health and well-being of all children living in California.

Sincerely,

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Yan Zhan, MD
Senior Policy Analyst
American Academy of Pediatrics, California District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Katrina Woo', with a long horizontal tail extending to the right.

Katrina Woo, MD
Senior Policy Analyst
American Academy of Pediatrics, CA

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Nancy Graff', with a long horizontal tail extending to the right.

Nancy Graff, MD FAAP
State Government Affairs Representative American Academy of Pediatrics, CA