



TO: House Regulator Reform Committee
FROM: Ken Fletcher, Director of Advocacy
DATE: October 22, 2019
RE: Opposition to HB 5019

Thank you, Chairman Webber and members of the committee. My name is Ken Fletcher and I am the Director of Advocacy for the American Lung Association in Michigan. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 5019, which would prohibit the state from promulgating or enforcing a rule that bans the sale, manufacturing, or use of a vaper product including a flavored product.

The need for Michigan to take bold action to protect youth from tobacco is more urgent than ever, with youth e-cigarette use reaching epidemic levels due to a 78 percent increase in high school e-cigarette use from 2017 to 2018, according to results from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s 2018 National Youth Tobacco Survey. This equals one million additional kids beginning to use e-cigarettes, placing their developing bodies and lungs at risk from the chemicals in e-cigarettes as well as a lifetime of addiction to a deadly product. This has caused the U.S. Surgeon General to declare e-cigarette use among young people an epidemic in an Advisory issued in December 2018.

The Lung Association supports Governor Whitmer's decision to take bold action to protect kids by combating e-cigarette use and especially support the rule to end sales of all flavored e-cigarettes, including mint and menthol.

E-cigarettes are not safe and can cause irreversible lung damage and lung disease. No one should use e-cigarettes or any other tobacco product. This message is even more urgent following the increasing reports of vaping-related illnesses and deaths nationwide. As of October 15, 2019, 33 deaths confirmed in 24 states, and 1,479 lung injury cases associated with the use of e-cigarette, or vaping, products have been reported to CDC from 49 states, the District of Columbia, and 1 U.S. territory.

E-cigarettes contain chemicals harmful to lung health such as heavy metals, carcinogens, vegetable glycerin and propylene glycol. The developing lungs of youth may be more at risk, making what the Surgeon General refers to as a youth e-cigarette epidemic even more alarming.

The Lung Association stands ready to help everyone quit tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. If people are seeking to quit tobacco, the Lung Association urges them to talk with a medical provider and use one of the seven FDA-approved quit-smoking treatments in combination with counseling. FDA has not found any e-cigarette to be safe and effective in helping smokers quit.

To protect public health and end the youth e-cigarette epidemic, we strongly support the governor's actions to end the sale of all flavored e-cigarette products, including mint and menthol, and to prohibit marketing practices that target and enhance the appeal of e-cigarette products to youth. The Lung Association does not support this effort to prevent those rules from being promulgated.

With the aim to save lives and reduce tobacco-related disease, the American Lung Association will continue to educate the public and advocate for more public health protections and proven effective policies to help prevent and reduce tobacco use, including e-cigarettes.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak today.