



LATE TESTIMONY: Written only

January 29, 2015

To: Representative Della Au Belatti, Chair
Representative Richard P. Creagan, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Health

From: Hawaii Public Health Association

Subject: HB0585 Relating to the Regulation of Electronic Smoking Devices

Dear Chair Au Belatti and Members of the Committee,

HPHA is an association of over 600 community members, public health professionals and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. HPHA also serves as a voice for public health professionals and as a repository for information about public health in the Pacific.

The Hawaii Public Health Association (HPHA) supports the passage of HB0585 which would prohibit the use of electronic smoking devices (ESDs) where smoking is prohibited.

As indicated in recent local media, youth fascination with ESDs warrant proactive measures to uphold social norms and curb usage before it is too late. According to the Hawaii Youth Tobacco Survey, lifetime e-cigarette use among high school students tripled from 5.1 percent in 2011 to 17.6 percent in 2013. Use also quadrupled among middle school students, from 1.8 percent to 7.9 percent, during the same time period. The rate of uptake for these products is alarming and the passage of measures to decrease social acceptability of ESDs is urgently needed.

According to the CDC, nicotine use by youths in any form is unsafe and can harm adolescent brain development. Additionally, the fact that ESDs are found to contain and emit toxic and carcinogenic chemicals, yet remain unregulated in terms of manufacturing and marketing, leaves the public highly vulnerable to its potentially devastating impact.

Widespread ESD use poses a serious threat to the progress made in tobacco control over the last 50 years in terms of decreasing addiction to nicotine and alleviating the burden of death and disability on the American public. The HPHA supports this policy to protect the health of people in Hawaii as well as future generations.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Kessler, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Health Association