



DATE: 8 Feb 2022

To: Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Representative Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair
Committee of Health, Human Services and Homelessness

Re: Strong Support for HB 1570 RELATING TO YOUTH VAPING EPIDEMIC

Hrg: 10 Feb 2022, 9:00 AM House conference room 329 via Videoconference

Dear Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawai'i Public Health Association (HPHA) is a group of over 450 community members, public health professionals, and organizations statewide dedicated to improving public health. Our mission is to promote public health in Hawai'i through leadership, collaboration, education and advocacy. Additionally, HPHA aims to call attention to issues around social justice and equity in areas that extend beyond the traditional context of health (e.g., education, digital equity, cultural sensitivity), which can have profound impacts on health equity and well-being. As stewards of public health, HPHA is also advocating for equity in all policies.

HPHA strongly supports HB 1570, which ban the sale of flavored tobacco and synthetic nicotine products; prohibit mislabeling of e-liquid products containing nicotine; and prohibits the marketing, advertising, or promoting of electronic smoking devices to appeal to individuals under twenty-one years of age.

Flavors in tobacco products is especially harmful in youth, who are enticed by the various flavors. Attracting youth to flavored nicotine products leads to nicotine addiction that keeps them hooked for life. In 2020, 8 in 10 youth who currently use e-cigarettes reported using a flavored product, up from 7 in 10 in 2019 (National Youth Tobacco Survey). Ending the sale of flavored tobacco products will reduce the appeal of these products and protect our keiki from a lifetime of addiction.

Ending the sale of all flavored tobacco will also advance health equity as disparities in tobacco use are due to the tobacco industry's history of marketing menthol cigarettes to youth and people of color. In Hawai'i, 78% of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander smokers use menthol cigarettes (Hawai'i BRFS, 2008). Mint and menthol flavored e-cigarettes are one of the most popular flavors among youth.



We strongly support HB 1570 and respectfully ask that you pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important public health issue affecting members of our community, especially our keiki.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Leocadia Conlon, PhD, MPH, PA-C
Legislative Committee Chair
Hawaii Public Health Association