



February 11, 2019

To: The Honorable Roy M. Takumi, Chair
The Honorable Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Re: **Strong Support for HB276 HD1**

Hrg: February 13, 2019 at 2:00 PM at Capitol Room 329

The Hawaii Public Health Association is a group 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.

HPHA strongly supports HB276 HD1, which would end the sale of flavored tobacco products, including flavored e-liquids.

Hawai'i is already experiencing a youth vaping epidemic. Studies have shown that 8 in 10 kids start with a flavored tobacco product. It's no coincidence that the rise in youth vaping has coincided with an explosion of sweet e-liquid flavors used to hook kids. With more than 15,500 flavors, these products are being irresponsibly marketed – who is the industry really targeting with flavors like Fruit Hoops, Sour Straws, or Cookie Monsta?

We must end the sale of candy-flavored tobacco to protect our youth from a lifetime of addiction. The industry is promoting flavors that mimic popular food or candy to hide the fact that they contain nicotine and with more kids who were never smokers using these products, we have an urgent need to act. I strongly support HB276 HD1 and ask you to pass this out of committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on important health issues affecting people in Hawai'i.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Holly Kessler'.

Holly Kessler
Executive Director
Hawaii Public Health Association