



WRITTEN TESTIMONY

March 21, 2017

To: The Honorable Della Au Belatti, Chair
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Health

The Honorable Roy M. Takumi, Chair
The Honorable Linda Ichiyama, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Hrg: March 22, 2017 at 2:15pm at Capitol Room 329

RE: **Testimony in SUPPORT of SB404, SD2**

The Hawaii Public Health Association (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 professionals and as a repository for information about public health in the Pacific.

HPHA strongly **supports SB404, SD2** which creates a tax on electronic smoking devices (ESDs) and requires wholesalers and retailers of ESDs to obtain a retail tobacco permit.

ESD or e-cigarette use among youth and young adults has become a national public health concern. E-cigarettes are now the most popularly used tobacco product among youth and young adults, surpassing cigarettes. While smoking rates in Hawai'i have decreased through the years, ESD use has rapidly increased, threatening the state's current tobacco prevention efforts.

This is particularly concerning because e-cigarettes provide a new way to deliver the drug nicotine. No matter how it is delivered, nicotine exposure can lead to addiction and harm the developing brain. Studies are also finding that ESDs can lead to cigarette use, especially among kids.

This bill will also require a retail tobacco permit which will allow the state to know who is selling e-cigarettes in Hawai'i and work with these merchants to educate and enforce current tobacco laws.

HPHA strongly **supports SB404, SD2** and asks 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
Hawai'i Public Health Association