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November 20, 2019

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
West Wing
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C., 20502

Dear President Trump:

In light of recent articles reporting you are reconsidering your position on flavored e-cigarettes, we write to urge you to follow through on your proclamation on September 11, 2019 to ban these products from the marketplace.

Among youth, e-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product since 2014. High school students alone have seen a 135 percent increase in e-cigarette use from 2017, with over one in four high school students now using e-cigarette products.[1] In fact, one in nine high school seniors report that they are vaping nicotine daily.[2] This epidemic is even reaching younger children, with reports showing that children as young as 12 to 15 are using these products. This increases the likelihood that they will transition to other tobacco products later in life.

Per the CDC under your administration, this rise in e-cigarette use can be attributed to the popularity of flavored products that appeal to youth.[3] In recent years, tobacco companies have significantly stepped up the introduction and marketing of flavored non-cigarette tobacco products, especially e-cigarettes. Research shows that these flavors play a key role in youth use of tobacco products. Flavors improve the taste and mask the harshness of tobacco products, making it easier for kids to try the product and ultimately become addicted. In fact, over 80% of children who ever used tobacco products started with a flavored product, and at least two-thirds of youth tobacco users said they use these products "because they come in flavors I like."[4] These flavors, including gummy bear, fruity cereal, and cotton candy, are aimed at kids and are readily available in both convenience stores and online.

It is clear that these flavored products are the latest in a long history of the tobacco industry's practice of targeting children. These products are creating a new public health crisis, resulting in another generation of youth being addicted to tobacco. The time to act is now. We cannot stand idly by as the health of our nation's children is being jeopardized by e-cigarettes and vaping products.

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Sincerely,

Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

Angie Craig
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

David Trone
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna
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Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu
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John B. Larson
Member of Congress

Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress

[1] FDA, "Trump Administration Combating Epidemic of Youth E-Cigarette Use with Plan to Clear Market of Unauthorized, Non-Tobacco-Flavored E-Cigarette Products," September 11, 2019, https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/trump-administration-combating-epidemic-youth-e-cigarette-use-plan-clear-market-unauthorized-non?utm_source=CTPEblast&utm_medium=email&utm_term=stratout&utm_content=pressrelease&utm_campaign=ctp-vaping

[2] Miech, R, et al., "Trends in Adolescent Vaping, 2017-2019," New England Journal of Medicine, published online September 18, 2019.

[3] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Use of Electronic Cigarettes and Any Tobacco Product Among Middle and High School Students—United States, 2011-2018," Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), 67(45):1276-1277. https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6745a5.htm?s_cid=mm6745a5_w. Current use defined as any use in the past month

[4] National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (US) Office on Smoking and Health. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General [Internet]. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US); 2016. Chapter 2, Patterns of E-Cigarette Use Among U.S. Youth and Young Adults.