

## OPINION

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OPEN FORUM *On Candy-Flavored Vaping Liquids*

# San Francisco leads with ban

By Patrick Reynolds

Congratulations, San Francisco, for passing the nation's first ban on the sale of candy-flavored vaping products. The evidence is clear that such e-cigarettes are an outrageously brazen ploy to snare the next generation into nicotine addiction.

I am appalled that the "No on Proposition E" campaign was almost entirely funded by my family's R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. It outspent the "Yes on Prop. E" campaign many times over. This was a David versus Goliath battle, Big Tobacco against health advocates.

San Franciscans are looking out for our kids, not protecting tobacco profits. The City by the Bay has stepped in to do what the ineffective U.S. Food and Drug Administration should have done when e-cigarettes and candy flavorings first appeared. While the FDA banned candy-flavored

tobacco cigarettes in 2009, e-cigarettes were not included.

Why is San Francisco's measure so important? Incredibly, the FDA just gave the e-cigarette makers an additional four years of inaction. This will allow them to go on unimpeded until 2022, and to continue luring kids to try their addictive products with flavors like grape, gummy bear and cotton candy. I struggle to understand why.

From 2011 to 2016, vaping among our nation's youth increased drastically, from 1.5 percent to 11.3 percent. Today, far more kids are vaping than smoking (11.3 percent vs. 8 percent). In fact, many teens who would never try regular cigarettes are using e-cigarettes without any awareness that they could trigger a lifetime addiction to nicotine. This is a public health epidemic among America's youth.

Ominously, a new study



Nick Oxford / New York Times 2014

**Voters supported a ban on the sale of flavored-tobacco products, including vaping liquids and menthol cigarettes.**

found that 63 percent of young Juul vapers (the newest craze) did not even know the product contains nicotine. Research by UC San Francisco shows that many kids who vape are likely to go on to smoke traditional cigarettes a year later. Banning flavored vaping liquids then also helps keep children away from cigarettes.

In the 1980s, it was our municipalities that led the way by passing the first smoking bans. The cities had the courage to go where state legislatures and Congress feared to tread. Now other cities are sure to follow, and eventually, legislatures will pass statewide bans of flavored tobacco and e-cigarettes, much like what hap-

pened with our smoking bans. It began with the cities.

Big Tobacco is fearful of that, because it sees vaping products as the future. That's why the industry poured more than \$12 million into defeating Prop. E.

It's time to stop another generation from getting hooked on nicotine. We can't wait years for the FDA to act. True, we don't have the science in yet about e-cigarettes, beyond the many carcinogens and nicotine they contain; it takes 20 to 30 years, on average, to get the diseases smoking causes. So we might not have reliable health data for decades. But as I like to say when I speak at middle and high schools, vaping might be like jumping out of the fifth story instead of the 10th story.

For those who don't believe in regulation, the facts on vaping provide a compelling argument against that oversimplified ideology, which leads to poor government.

San Franciscans made the right choice, and stood up to lead the rest of our nation. Now other cities will ban flavored vaping products as well.

*Patrick Reynolds is the executive director of the Foundation for a Smokefree America.*