



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

For science. For action. For health.

March 25, 2014

The Honorable Elizabeth Esty
509 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Esty:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals who champion the health of all people and communities, I write in support of Protecting Children from Electronic Cigarette Advertising Act of 2014.

The use of e-cigarettes among middle and high school students has doubled from 2011 to 2012. As the popularity rises, so does the potential impact on the public's health. Adolescence is a critical time for the developing brain. Therefore, youth may be more susceptible and receptive to nicotine than adults and the adolescent brain may develop differently under the use of nicotine. Electronic cigarettes deliver varying levels of nicotine, a highly addictive drug, and may contain other potentially harmful chemicals. Of additional concern, smoking an e-cigarette introduces youth to a behavior that is very similar to smoking, a behavior that continues to be the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, accounting for 480,000 deaths every year. In fact, a recent study published in JAMA Pediatrics found that e-cigarette use may encourage conventional cigarette use among U.S. youth.

It is critical that we take action to prevent young people from starting to smoke. While further research is needed to fully understand the long-term health effects of these devices, it should not preclude congressional efforts from ensuring that e-cigarette manufacturers cannot use similar promotional techniques that cigarette manufacturers used for decades to target youth.

Thank you for your leadership on efforts to ban the marketing of e-cigarettes to our nation's children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Georges Benjamin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Georges" and last name "Benjamin" clearly legible.

Georges Benjamin, MD
Executive Director