



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO MEDICINE

Comprehensive Cancer Center



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January 13, 2014

Dear Council,

My name is Dr. Andrea C. King, Professor and Research Section Chief and Mission Director of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience at the University of Chicago and director of the Clinical Addictions Research Laboratory. In addition, I am co-leader of the Cancer Prevention and Control Program at the University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center, a National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center established more than 40 years ago committed to exploring and developing innovative ways to prevent and reduce the devastating effects of cancer. We engage in, and support, research and outreach efforts aimed at reducing cancer incidence and mortality, as well as eliminating cancer health disparities among underrepresented ethnic and racial groups.

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease, including cancer and lung and cardiovascular disease. In the last five years, e-cigarettes use has increased dramatically in the United States, and the e-cigarette industry continues to grow at an alarming rate. E-cigarettes appeal to youth and first-time smokers due to the kid-friendly flavors and ease of access. The lack of regulations for e-cigarettes promotes the dangerous perception that e-cigarettes are harmless. However, serious concerns have been raised that their acceptability may perpetuate and re-normalize smoking behaviors.

In a recent study by our research group, we have compared the effects of passive exposure to e-cigarettes and combustible cigarette use on smoking desire and urge among young smokers. We found that passive exposure to both e-cigarettes and combustible cigarettes significantly increased participants' desire and urge to smoke combustible cigarettes. These findings, which have been submitted recently for publication in a leading medical journal, strongly support the hypothesis that e-cigarette use contributes to enhanced smoking behavior.

Therefore, we support the proposed City of Chicago ordinance to define e-cigarettes as "tobacco products" and amending the existing Clean Indoor Air ordinance to include the use of electronic smoking devices. E-cigarettes have the potential to lead to lifelong addiction and chronic disease, and exemptions of these products from current tobacco bans and policies could negatively impact broader smoking cessation efforts by increasing public exposure to smoking triggers.

Thank you to the Council for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Andrea C. King
Professor and Research Section Chief and Mission Director of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience

