

October 16, 2019

Mr. Bill McBride  
Executive Director  
National Governors Association  
Hall of States  
444 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 267  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. McBride:

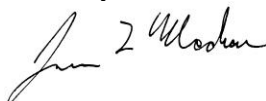
On behalf of the American Medical Association (AMA) and our physician and medical student members, I am writing to urge the National Governors Association (NGA) and its members to support measures to prohibit the sale of flavored e-cigarette products. The AMA believes that the use of e-cigarettes and vaping is an urgent public health epidemic, a belief that has been reaffirmed by the e-cigarette-related lung illnesses currently sweeping across the country. We are encouraged by the states—Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah and Washington—that have taken swift action to protect the public from harm and encourage all states to follow suit.

A particular danger of e-cigarettes is the appeal of flavorings. Candy and fruit flavored e-cigarette products play a significant role in drawing young people to vaping. Flavored products are often perceived to be “safer” and are especially attractive to young users who enjoy sweet or minty flavors. Deliberate marketing of these qualities to young people has been disturbingly successful, and the numbers of America’s youth using e-cigarette products is soaring. In addition to the harm that can be caused by e-cigarette use directly – which has been tragically demonstrated in recent weeks by over a thousand people falling ill with serious or fatal lung illnesses linked to vaping—e-cigarettes have the potential to undermine the public health gains that have been made over the years in combatting the smoking epidemic. Evidence has demonstrated that youths who use e-cigarettes are at greater risk of subsequently initiating tobacco use.

Given the dramatic rise in e-cigarette use among young people in the last year alone, it is clear that we must all do everything we can to help reverse this epidemic. The way to prevent another generation from developing nicotine dependence is to limit access to flavored products that are designed and marketed to appeal to young people and continue to raise awareness that e-cigarettes are harmful, powerfully addictive, and can often lead young people to smoke conventional cigarettes. With serious vaping-related illnesses and deaths being reported, more stringent policies are necessary.

The AMA stands ready to assist NGA and governors across the country with efforts to restrict access to flavored e-cigarettes. Please contact Annalia Michelman, JD, Senior Legislative Attorney, AMA Advocacy Resource Center, at [annalia.michelman@ama-assn.org](mailto:annalia.michelman@ama-assn.org), or (312) 464-4788 to discuss how our two organizations can work together on this pressing public health issue.

Sincerely,



James L. Madara, MD