



October 1, 2019

City of Long Beach
411 W. Ocean Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90802

RE: R-30 Ban the Sale and Distribution of E-Cigarettes

Dear Mayor Robert Garcia and Long Beach City Councilmembers,

The American Heart Association is excited to see the City of Long Beach engaged on the youth tobacco epidemic by addressing flavored e-cigarettes. We encourage the City Council to enact a more robust flavored tobacco ordinance to address the root cause of tobacco initiation and its lifetime effects of nicotine addiction.

There has been a dramatic increase in adolescent e-cigarette initiation. During 2017–2018 alone, e-cigarette use rose by 78% in high school students and 48% in middle school students. There is increasing evidence that **the use of e-cigarettes may catalyze transition to the use of traditional cigarettes and other drugs, particularly in kids and young adults.**

Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, claiming on average 480,000 lives each year. Smoking increases the risk for heart disease and stroke and the risk for blood clots. The best way to prevent tobacco-related illness and death is to prevent tobacco use in the first place.

The tobacco industry is actively and aggressively working to addict a new generation of users with flavored tobacco products. They know that flavors like grape, mint (menthol), cotton candy, bubble gum and gummy bears mask the harsh taste of tobacco and are highly appealing to youth.

Ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products will help protect our youth from nicotine addiction and is crucial to preventing tobacco-related death and disease. The American Heart Association respectfully asks for your support of a more robust and comprehensive public health policy.

Amanda Staples
Community Advocacy Director
American Heart Association