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AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION IN CALIFORNIA  
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July 2, 2015

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The Honorable Janet Wolf, Chair  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara 93101

Dear Supervisor Wolf:

The American Lung Association in California is the leading public health organization fighting to reduce and prevent the harmful effects of tobacco use. With a mission of saving lives and improving the health of Californians and their lungs, the Lung Association supports Santa Barbara County’s strong commitment to protect the public health by increasing restrictions on smoking in public places and prohibiting the use of electronic cigarettes where smoking is prohibited.

The American Lung Association is concerned that very little is known about the health effects of electronic cigarettes and of the aerosols they release, or what the health consequences of them might be. Two initial studies have found formaldehyde, benzene and tobacco-specific nitrosamines (a cancer-causing chemical) coming from the secondhand emissions from e-cigarettes. While we have a lot more to learn about these products, it’s clear that there is much to be concerned about and there’s a lot more than just ‘water vapor’ in these products. In addition, it is important to note that e-cigarettes have not been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to be safe and effective in helping smokers quit cigarettes. More recently, the California Department of Public Health and the state health officer issued a Health Advisory and report warning Californians of the toxicity of e-cigarettes.

We are deeply concerned that these products are starting kids on a lifetime addiction to nicotine. There are more than 470 e-cigarette brands for sale today offered in over 7,700 flavors including candy-flavors including Captain Crunch, gummy bear, cotton candy, Atomic Fireball and fruit loops.

The targeting of youth has worked -- leading to a rapid increase in e-cigarette usage among middle and high school-aged children. According to CDC, the number of students in grades 6-12 reporting having ever used an e-cigarette doubled from 3.3 percent to 6.8 percent from 2011 to 2012.

It is critical for communities to remain vigilant in protecting their residents from new and emerging tobacco products. We urge you to move forward to adopt this policy to protect the residents of Santa Barbara County.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Amazeen  
Vice President, Public Policy & Advocacy

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