

## E-CIGARETTES — VAPOR PRODUCTS



Office of the  
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### OBJECTIVE

Protect Washington youth from the harms of e-cigarettes and nicotine addiction.

### PROBLEM

The popularity of e-cigarettes and other vapor products is on the rise, posing a threat to youth health. Yet these products are subject to virtually no state or federal regulations.

Current law does not adequately prevent the sale and marketing of these products to children, protect against accidental poisoning from ingestion, or ensure consumers are informed about the chemical compositions they are inhaling. Common sense regulation of e-cigarettes is needed to ensure public health and safety and curb youth nicotine addiction.

### BACKGROUND

**Teen use of e-cigs is increasing:** At least 20 percent of high school seniors in Washington reported e-cigarette use in 2014, up from 7 percent in 2012.<sup>1</sup> Nicotine is particularly harmful to brain development in children, and a recent study found that teens who start using e-cigarettes are 8 times as likely to take up smoking.<sup>2</sup>

In Washington, it is illegal to sell e-cigarettes to minors, but no state agency has authority or funding to enforce the law, and e-cigarette products can be easily purchased online.

**There are few safety regulations on e-cigarettes and vapor products:** E-liquid, the nicotine-containing component, can poison children via ingestion, inhalation, and skin contact. In 2015, at least 61 e-cigarette poisonings were reported, with 84 percent concerning 1- to 3-year olds.<sup>3</sup>

The FDA does not currently regulate ingredients or safety claims made by manufacturers. A Harvard study recently discovered diacetyl, an ingredient known to cause “popcorn lung” (bronchiolitis obliterans), in 75 percent of the flavored e-liquids they tested.<sup>4</sup> Some products labeled “nicotine-free” actually contain small amounts of nicotine, and a recent AG investigation found e-liquids being falsely marketed as organic.

### LEGISLATION (HB 1645 / SB 5573)

**To increase youth prevention and consumer safety, HB 1645 / SB 5573 will:**

- Prohibit the sale of e-cigarettes and vapor products without a license, and allow the Liquor and Cannabis Board to issue fines to stores caught selling e-cigarettes to minors;
- Require school districts to prohibit use of e-cigarettes on school property, including school buses and other school vehicles;
- Restrict the sale of e-cigarettes over the internet or in unsecured displays;
- Require listing of ingredients and warning labels on the packaging of vapor products;
- Require child-resistant packaging for all e-cigarettes.

### OFFICE CONTACTS:

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### SUPPORT

#### PRIME SPONSORS

- **Sen. Frockt**
- **Rep. Pollet**

#### ORGANIZATIONS

- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Cancer Society - Cancer Action Network
- American Heart Association
- American Lung Association
- Foundation for Healthy Generations
- Washington State Labor Council
- Washington State Public Health Roundtable
- Washington Association of Local Public Health Officials
- Washington Poison Control Center

#### NEWS PUBLICATIONS

- Tacoma News Tribune
- The Bellingham Herald
- Yakima Herald

1. Washington State Department of Health (<http://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/DataSystems/HealthyYouthSurvey>)

2. Fred Hutch (<https://www.fredhutch.org/en/news/center-news/2015/09/ecigs-gateway-to-smoking.html>)

3. Washington State Poison Control Center (<http://www.wapc.org/wp-content/uploads/WAPC-Toxic-Trends-E-Cigs-November-2015.pdf>)

4. Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (<http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/15-10185/>)