

LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
DIVISION BOARD FY 2018-19

**Chair**

Robert Lundy

**President**

John G. Harold, MD

**Chair-Elect**

Paul Craig

Micah Ali

Eric Boyer

Cathi Cunningham

Ravi Dave, MD

Suzanne DeJong

George W. Greene, Esq.

Alice Issai

Dino Kasdagly

Bob Larlee

Mika Leah

Ray Matthews, MD

Ken Orkin

Karen Oxman

David Pryor, MD

Jessica Sims, MD

Paul Watkins, Esq.

**Affiliate Development Officer**

Shawn Casey-White

**Vice President, Heart Walk**

Meredith Crabtree Warner

**Vice President, Social Events**

Chelsea Spiker

**Vice President, Health Strategies**

Nicola Ross

Los Angeles County Division Office  
816 S. Figueroa Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Phone: 213.291.7041  
Fax: 213.291.7002

[www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)



**American  
Heart  
Association**

March 22, 2019

Councilmember David Ryu

Chair of Health, Education, Neighborhoods, Parks, Arts, and River Committee

City Council, c/o City Clerk, Room 395

City Hall, 200 North Spring Street

Los Angeles, CA 90012-4801

RE: Motion 18-1104 Flavored Tobacco Products / Youth Tobacco Use / Sale Restriction / Proposed Strategy

Dear Councilmember David Ryu:

The American Heart Association supports Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell and motion 18-1104 and its intent to ban flavored tobacco products for its detrimental effects on youth. This proposed ordinance will limit access to a variety of flavored tobacco products which are the tobacco industry's primary method for targeting and hooking new smokers.

Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, claiming on average 480,000 lives every year. It increases the risk for heart disease and stroke, especially in those who are genetically predisposed. Smoking decreases our ability to exercise, increases the tendency for blood clots, and decreases the good cholesterol in our bodies. The best way to prevent tobacco-related illness and death is to prevent people from starting to smoke in the first place.

Flavors including grape, menthol, cotton candy, bubble gum and gummy bears mask the harsh taste of tobacco and are highly appealing to youth, encouraging young smokers.

- According to California Healthy Kids Survey results, more than 1 in 5 (24%) of Los Angeles Unified School District 11<sup>th</sup>-grade smokers reported using electronic cigarettes or other vaping devices which capitalize on flavors.<sup>1</sup>
- In California, 9.4% of young adults (18-24) currently use e-cigarettes.

The tobacco industry targets young people and communities of color with flavored tobacco products. Tobacco companies have historically targeted African-American communities with aggressive marketing of mentholated tobacco products and it is no coincidence that 95% of African-American youth smokers report smoking menthol-flavored cigarettes.<sup>2</sup> As a result, African Americans bear a disproportionate burden of tobacco-related disease and death; 47,000 African Americans die annually from smoking-

<sup>1</sup> California Healthy Kids Survey. LAUSD - CHKS Sample Secondary 2016-2017 Main Report. [https://data.calschls.org/resources/LAUSD\\_CHKS\\_Sample\\_1617\\_Sec\\_CHKS.pdf](https://data.calschls.org/resources/LAUSD_CHKS_Sample_1617_Sec_CHKS.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Giovino, G.A., et al., Differential trends in cigarette smoking in the USA: is menthol slowing progress? Tobacco Control, 2013.



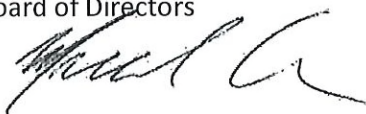
related illnesses, making tobacco use the largest preventable cause of death among African Americans.

This proposed policy is an opportunity to protect our communities from flavored tobacco products – including mint and menthol - and is crucial to preventing a lifetime of tobacco addiction. The American Heart Association respectfully asks for your support of this vital health policy to ensure that all Angelenos have the healthy and prosperous lives they deserve.

Sincerely,



Bob Lundy  
Founding Partner  
Hooper, Lundy and Bookman PC  
Chairman of the LA County  
Board of Directors



Micah Ali, President  
Compton Unified School District



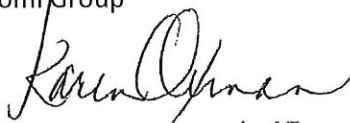
Ravi Dave, MD, Cardiologist  
UCLA Health System



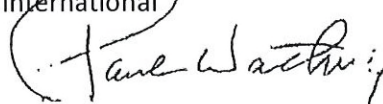
Alice Issai, President  
Adventist Health Glendale



Mika Leah, President  
Goomi Group



Karen Oxman, Executive VP  
Hub International



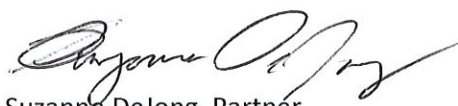
Paul Watkins, JD, President&CEO  
Dignity Health Northridge Medical  
Center



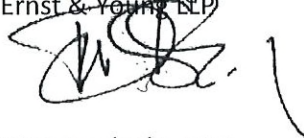
John Gordon Harold, MD  
Clinical Professor of Medicine  
Cedars-Sinai  
President of the LA County  
Board of Directors



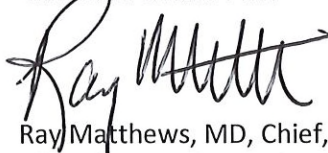
Eric Boyer, EVP & CTO  
AT&T Services, Inc.



Suzanne DeJong, Partner  
Ernst & Young LLP



Dino Kasdagly, COO  
L.A. Care Health Plan



Ray Matthews, MD, Chief, Division  
of Cardiovascular Medicine  
Keck Medicine of USC



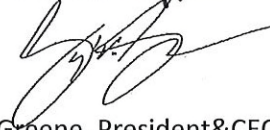
David P. Pryor, MD, Regional VP  
Anthem Blue Cross



Paul Craig  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Keck Medicine of USC  
Chair-Elect of the LA County  
Board of Directors



Cathi Cunningham, Partner  
Deloitte & Touche LLP



George Greene, President&CEO  
Hospital Association of Southern  
California



Bob Larlee, Vice President  
City National Bank



Ken Orkin, Chairman  
ITG Automotive



Jessica Sims, MD, Region  
Medical Director, Regal Medical  
Group, Inc.

cc: Councilmember David Ryu  
cc: Councilmember Curren Price, Jr.  
cc: Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell  
cc: City Clerk  
cc: Eric Villanueva  
cc: Andrew Choi