

Communication from Public

Name: Bernie Klein, MD

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Council File No: 18-1104

Comments for Public Posting: Please accept the attached letter encouraging the Los Angeles City Council to pas a comprehensive flavored tobacco ordinance.
Thank you.



June 2, 2021

The Honorable Monica Rodriguez
Los Angeles City Council, District 7
200 N. Spring St., Room 455
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SUBJECT: Proposed ban on sale of flavored tobacco products

Dear Council Member Rodriguez:

On behalf of Providence Holy Cross Medical Center, I am writing to urge you to pass a comprehensive ordinance ending the sale of all flavored tobacco, including candy flavored e-cigarettes, sweet cigars, menthol cigarettes and flavored hookah products.

Last summer, Governor Newsom signed into law SB 793, representing a monumental shift towards achieving a smoke-free state and demonstrating the state's efforts to get these products out of our communities. Unfortunately, given the recent qualified referendum, the law to end the sale of flavored tobacco products will not take effect unless and until approved by voters in the November 2022 election. As a result, youth candy-flavored tobacco products will remain on the market for two years to addict young new users. Every day of delay before this law takes effect means more youth being exposed and susceptible to becoming addicted to tobacco.

Youth are lured by candy flavors in e-cigarettes which has led to nearly 20 percent of high schoolers using e-cigarettes nationwide. The original flavored tobacco product, the menthol cigarette, has hooked youth for far too long. Hookah products are also available in a variety of fruit and candy flavors and they are increasingly popular with youth. From 2011 to 2015, hookah use among high school and middle school students rose by more than 50 percent. The rapid expansion of hookah in Los Angeles means that more retailers will sell to kids. Offering any sort of exemption only increases young people's access to these dangerous and addictive products.

I urge you to enact a strong ordinance that ends the sale of flavored tobacco products. Your actions will protect Los Angeles youth from a lifetime of tobacco addiction. I appreciate your consideration and look forward to continue working with you and the City of Los Angeles on ways to improve public health for its residents.

Sincerely,

Bernie Klein, M.D.
Chief Executive