



TO: Wisconsin State Legislators

FROM: American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Allergy Society, Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards, Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Wisconsin Medical Society, Wisconsin Nurses Association, Wisconsin Public Health Association

DATE: March 18, 2015

RE: Oppose LRB 1116

We oppose legislation that weakens Wisconsin's very popular and effective smoke-free law and prohibits local elected officials from making decisions on the use of untested, unproven, and unregulated electronic cigarettes in public places. We urge you to decline to co-sponsor LRB 1116.

This legislation is premature and potentially dangerous. There is little known about the health effects and long-term consequences of electronic cigarette use both on users and bystanders. There was a time when people believed that secondhand cigarette smoke wasn't harmful. As a result, millions experienced negative health effects and some lost their lives. Passing this legislation will tie the hands of local elected officials in the future with the science we have today. It will invalidate existing ordinances related to electronic cigarettes that have been enacted in several Wisconsin communities and have a chilling effect on public health policy for many years to come.

A growing number of studies have examined the contents of e-cigarette aerosol. Some have found e-cigarette aerosol to contain heavy metals, volatile organic compounds and tobacco-specific nitrosamines, among other potentially harmful chemicals. A Food and Drug Administration study found cancer-causing substances in several of the e-cigarette samples tested. Most recently, [data published](#) in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that the amount of formaldehyde, a known carcinogen, inhaled in a day when using certain e-cigarette devices could be significantly higher than that inhaled when smoking a pack of combustible cigarettes. Diacetyl, a substance found in e-cigarettes, is known to destroy lungs and was the subject of a [recent watchdog report](#).

Exposure to secondhand aerosol from e-cigarettes requires further research, but preliminary studies indicate nonusers can be exposed to the same potentially harmful chemicals as users. This exposure could be especially problematic for vulnerable populations such as children, pregnant women, and people with lung and heart disease depending on the level of exposure.

While e-cigarette manufacturers may claim the ingredients are just "water vapor" or "safe," these products are completely unregulated and there is no sure way for e-cigarette users to know what they are consuming. Additionally, there are hundreds of types of e-cigarettes on the market today and the products vary considerably by ingredients, and quality control and assurance.

Electronic cigarettes are unproven and unregulated products and they do not deserve special protection in state law. We urge you to oppose this legislation, and preserve local governments' ability to craft laws that meet the needs of their communities.