From:	Cynthia Stremba
To:	Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject:	Flavored e-cig and flavored tobacco sale restrictions
Date:	Monday, October 26, 2020 1:10:21 PM

Dear Missoula City Council Members,

We are all parent volunteers with Parents Against Vaping (PAVe), a national grassroots organization fighting the Predatory behavior of Big Tobacco towards teens. We support a ban on the sale of flavored e-cigarette products and all flavored tobacco products and we want you to know why.

As parents, we know first hand the pain that the youth vaping epidemic has caused to the 3.6 million families across the country whose lives have been upended by this adolescent public health crisis. We are not “bad parents”, uninvolved in our kids lives or ignorant to what “proper parenting” looks like as some would like to suggest.

Vaping products have been marketed to our kids as harmless flavored water vapor and came on the market when even adults didn’t understand what they were - and many still don’t. The products are stealth-by-design and resemble everyday items used by our kids (pens, highlighters, flash drives). Big Tobacco has used marketing practices and youth oriented social-media messages to make their products “cool”. Kids who never would have touched cigarettes because of the health risks, fully embraced Big Tobacco’s vaping messaging and unknowingly, are becoming a new generation of nicotine addicts. As parents (and sometimes teachers), we have had to deal with the repercussions - kids who can’t concentrate, are irritable, aggressive, emotionally undone, with an inability to stop vaping. For some of us, we are dealing with severe health issues - persistent coughs and breathing issues, extreme weight loss, gastrointestinal problems, cardiovascular problems and even double lung transplants! It’s horrifying. We all have stories. They are unique to each family and yet universal to all of us.

Around the country, children as young as 4th grade begin vaping every day introduced by older siblings and friends. Every day, more and more kids are becoming addicted to nicotine whose health risks are well documented. This year, teens are using these flavored products with more frequency than before, a sign of greater nicotine addiction that harms their developing brains and lungs. Every day there is more evidence that these products can cause cardiovascular harm.

It infuriates us that Big Tobacco is making billions of dollars off the health of our kids. Flavored products with names like “unicorn poop” and “cotton candy” are developed solely with the intention of attracting children. Menthol, used by 37% of all youth who vape, was designed to impart a cooling and soothing sensation designed to mask the harshness of tobacco products. Menthol makes it easier for beginner smokers and kids to tolerate smoking. It’s also harder to quit. This crisis is made even more urgent by the

COVID pandemic. A recent Stanford study has shown that teens who vape are 5-7 times more likely to contract COVID.

The end result of Big Tobacco targeting our kids with flavors has been the destruction of the health of millions - while they pocket billions. How is that acceptable?

Thank you,
PAVe Parent Volunteers
Parentsgainstvaping.org

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