

Abel, Pamela

From: rachel [rachiti@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, December 11, 2014 5:33 AM
To: Health; Cynda Solberg; jerry.halvorson@gmail.com; Wilcox, Judy; Edgar, Mark; Phair, Matthew; Lasky, Pat; Sieling, Renae
Subject: Please use peer-reviewed studies to guide your views on vaping - from a UW-Madison Alum

Good Day,

I am a UW-Madison alum who graduated in 2000. I was born, raised, and continue to live in Wisconsin. When people ask me what my favorite city is - I say Madison, Wisconsin even though I've traveled around the world.

As an alum, I recognize Madison as a progressive, thoughtful, vibrant city with an excellent downtown area (the part I always think of when I think of Madison, WI).

However, my opinion of this town has recently taken a major hit. I discovered that rather than focus on peer-reviewed scientific studies which dispel the pseudo-science claiming vaping is very dangerous, my favorite city is now considering actions which would place vaping into the same category as a flaming substance which shares carcinogens with anyone within breathing distance to it.

I have never been a smoker or a drinker. When I was in college I went to the clubs to dance not smoke or drink. However, I DO vape. I began vaping because my body cannot even tolerate sugar-free gum or flavored water anymore. I wanted something that I could use which would give me a pleasant flavor without any physical problems. Vaping was the answer. I use a zero nicotine 'juice' which has just all natural domestic flavorings (no different than picking up vanilla flavoring for baking off the shelf), vegetable glycerin (also found in food including the Kashi granola bars I eat), and propylene glycol (an inert substance used in those flavored water liquids which is also an antibacterial when vaporized). My husband, a former pack a day smoker for over 20 years, vapes nicotine-containing vapor with the same other ingredients as mine. I don't worry about the nicotine because it's the same natural ingredient found in tomatoes, eggplants, potatoes...things I gladly feed my family on a regular basis. My husband and I cook almost all of our food from scratch because we want to limit ingesting harmful chemicals and additives. We buy local and organic whenever possible. We take care of our bodies.

I have read the peer-reviewed scientific research demonstrating the significantly lower risk to former smokers as well as the zero risk to anyone near the now-vapers when their device is in use. If the peer-reviewed science showed risk, I would force my husband outside to vape as I did for years when he smoked. However, instead, I encourage him to vape indoors. In fact, his ability to vape indoors is what convinced him to try vaping when all of his previous attempts to quit smoking failed. The sensation of inhaling while holding a vaping device (which mimics that of smoking but should NOT be confused with it as the action is the ONLY similarity), his ability to lower the nicotine level as his physical addiction decreased over time, and his ability to stick with it because of the previous three factors kept him going.

Vaping is progress. Vaping gives smokers a viable alternative to smoking which is many magnitude better for human beings. Vaping is not evil or harmful or scary. It uses chemicals which have been tested and deemed safe by the FDA for use in food products or are naturally occurring in products many of us ingest on a weekly basis. Madison, Wisconsin should ENCOURAGE all smokers to switch to vaping. The best way they can do this is by using peer-reviewed science to develop

guidelines NOT by caving to narrow-minded scaremongering. Not only are limitations aligning vaping with cigarettes illogical and unscientific, but they are harmful to residents in and visitors to Madison, Wisconsin. One has only to spend a few minutes listening to decades-long cigarette users turned vapers to learn of the irreplaceable role vaping played in their first 100% successful attempt to quit smoking. Think of the lives that can be saved by encouraging vaping. Think of the children whose parents will now have a device which makes quitting smoking as easy or easier than starting a healthy diet or switching from a sedentary to an active lifestyle. The possibilities are endless. However, if you restrict away vaping or take away so many of the benefits of vaping over smoking - such as the ability to respectfully vape in public places - you will keep thousands from taking that first step. You will no longer be a progressive city.

I love Madison, Wisconsin. One of my dreams is to someday move back to this town. However, if this ordinance passes, it will no longer be even a consideration for me. I value my husband's health too much to risk his well-being by restricting his vaping needlessly and illogically. Please, do not destroy OUR wonderful city by passing your ordinance restricting where and how one can vape because it illogical, unscientific, and harmful to your residents for the reasons I have mentioned above.

Please use peer-reviewed science to guide your discussions on vaping today.

Sincerely,

Rachel Disterhaft
UW-Madison Class of 2000