

Abel, Pamela

From: Greg Johnson [gjohnson.pcpro@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 3:06 PM
To: Health; Cynda Solberg; jerry.halvorson@gmail.com; Wilcox, Judy; Edgar, Mark; Phair, Matthew; Lasky, Pat; Sieling, Renae
Subject: In regards to the proposed ban on e-cigarette use in public places

Good afternoon,

As a long-time resident and registered voter of the great state of Wisconsin, I am writing to inform you of my strong opposition to the banning of e-cigarette use where smoking is prohibited in Madison.

Despite the known risks associated with smoking traditional tobacco cigarettes, I smoked a pack a day for almost 20 years. Throughout that time I tried numerous times to quit using every FDA-approved product available - patches, gum, pills - and nothing worked. These products were not only prohibitively expensive, but also ineffective at curbing my desire for tobacco. I felt trapped by cigarettes, and my body was suffering numerous consequences of my inability to quit.

Since the day I purchased an electronic cigarette in hopes that it would help me quit the real thing, I have not smoked a single tobacco cigarette. That was almost 3 years ago. After all of my trials and tribulations trying to quit smoking through the use of FDA-approved products I was able to instantaneously stop myself from using combustible tobacco with the help of these products.

Since then the changes in my body have been nothing short of miraculous. I no longer experience shortness of breath after physical activity. In fact, I have begun a workout routine that has helped me to lose a substantial amount of weight. I can play with my son like a Father should. My sleep apnea has disappeared, as has my snoring. My wife is back in the bed and happier than ever with my physical fitness. Overall, my quality of life has increased tenfold simply because I began vaporizing organic, flavored e-liquid instead of inhaling poisonous tobacco smoke. Vaping may have literally saved my life.

While I understand that this proposal will not limit or ban the sale of these potentially life-saving products in Madison, it is my belief - and the belief of the scientific community - that such a proposal is not in the interest of public health, and may actually encourage smokers to continue smoking.

Please take a few moments to consider the following:

- a. Smoking bans are ostensibly enacted to protect the public from the harm of secondhand smoke, but e-cigarettes have not been found to pose a risk to bystanders. In fact, all evidence to date shows that the low health risks associated with e-cigarettes are comparable to other smokeless nicotine products.***
- b. The low risks of e-cigarettes is supported by research done by Dr. Siegel of Boston University, Dr. Eissenberg of Virginia Commonwealth, Dr Maciej L Goniewicz of the Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Dr. Laugesen of Health New Zealand, Dr. Igor Burstyn of Drexel University, and by the fact that the FDA testing, in spite of its press statement, failed to find harmful levels of carcinogens or toxic levels of any chemical in the vapor.***
- c. A comprehensive review conducted by Dr. Igor Burstyn of Drexel University School of Public Health based on over 9,000 observations of e-cigarette liquid and vapor found "no apparent concern" for bystanders exposed to e-cigarette vapor, even under "worst case" assumptions about exposure.***
- d. Electronic cigarette use is easy to distinguish from actual smoking. Although some e-cigarettes resemble real cigarettes, many do not. It is easy to tell when someone lights a cigarette from the smell of smoke. E-cigarette vapor is practically odorless, and generally any detectable odor is not unpleasant and smells nothing like smoke. Additionally, e-cigarette users can decide whether to release any vapor ("discreet vaping"). With so little evidence of use, enforcing use bans on electronic cigarettes would be nearly impossible.***
- e. The ability to use electronic cigarettes in public spaces will actually improve public health by inspiring other smokers to switch and reduce their health risks by an estimated 99%.***
- f. Losing the ability to test e-liquids before purchasing will have a significant and negative impact on your ability to***

purchase/sell e-liquids.

g. By making e-cigarette users go outdoors, the City will be sending a strong message to traditional smokers that e-cigarettes are no safer than smoking. This will actually maintain the number of smokers in Madison, rather than help reduce smoking. This is a far more realistic risk to public health than any unfounded concerns about possible youth or non-smoker use uptake.

In fact, the most recent report by the CDC showed that the dramatic increase in e-cigarette use over that past 3 years has not led to an increase in youth smoking. Youth smoking of traditional cigarttes continues to decline to record low levels.

h. E-cigarette use does not promote the smoking of traditional cigarettes, nor does it threaten the gains of tobacco control over the past few decades. In fact, by normalizing e-cigarette use over traditional smoking, the efforts of tobacco control are being supported. If anything, e-cigarette use denormalizes conventional smoking by setting the example of smokers choosing a far less harmful alternative to traditional smoking. The CDC surveys clearly show that there has been no "gateway effect" causing non-smokers to start smoking. As e-cigarettes have become more popular, all available evidence is showing that more and more smokers are quitting traditional cigarettes, including youth smokers.

I understand that the proposed ordinance is listed on the agenda for the upcoming Board of Parks Commissioners meeting on December 10. Please take some time to educate yourselves about this important issue prior to that meeting so you can provide valuable feedback that will help increase our community's public health.

I have provided links below that will help clearly demonstrate that banning the use of e-cigarettes in public places is not the right choice for Madison.

http://casaa.org/Clinical_Research.html

http://casaa.org/Lab_Reports_ecigarettes.html

http://casaa.org/Scientific_Opinon.html

<http://onvaping.com/the-ultimate-list-of-studies-on-e-cigarettes-and-their-safety/>

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Greg Johnson
Concerned Wisconsinite