

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
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July 29, 2014

Re: TEROC E-Cigarette Sampling Position

To Whom It May Concern:

The Tobacco Education and Research Oversight Committee (TEROC) is a legislatively mandated oversight committee (California Health and Safety Code Sections 104365-104370) that monitors the use of Proposition 99 Cigarette and Tobacco Products Surtax Fund (CTPSF) revenues for tobacco control, prevention education, and tobacco-related research in California. In performing this mandate, TEROC provides advice to the California Department of Public Health, the University of California, and the California Department of Education regarding the administration of the Proposition 99-funded programs. TEROC is also responsible for producing a State master plan for tobacco control and tobacco-related research, and making recommendations to the State Legislature for improving tobacco control and tobacco-related research efforts in California.

TEROC supports legislation and regulation banning free sampling of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and other tobacco products to protect the public, particularly our youth from experimenting and becoming dependent on these dangerous, addictive tobacco products. Further, TEROC urges legislation and regulation that will prohibit distribution of free, nominal, or low-cost tobacco products, and redemption of coupons and similar promotional offers that reduce the cost of tobacco products at bars and all other areas accessible to the public at all times.

TEROC has concerns regarding the harmful nature of tobacco products, such as e-cigarettes containing nicotine, cigars, little cigars, and hookah and pipe tobacco, which have no sampling restrictions. Particular concerns include the ease at which these products can be obtained and sampled by youth and young adults and the potential risk that e-cigarettes and their liquid solutions (e-liquids) may serve as a gateway to nicotine addiction and further use of tobacco products by youth and young adults.

TEROC recommends that local jurisdictions hold e-cigarettes and other tobacco products to the same market restrictions that already exist for traditional cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products under the federal Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, as part of TEROC's commitment to minimizing tobacco industry influence and activity within California. Such measures are needed to protect kids from predatory marketing of these addictive products.



July 29, 2014

TEROC is alarmed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recent report that found that the percentage of U.S. middle and high school students who have used e-cigarettes more than doubled in a one year period; usage was 4.7 percent in 2011 and 10.0 percent in 2012. In 2012, more than 1.78 million middle and high school students nationwide tried e-cigarettes. The CDC study also found that 76.3 percent of middle and high school students who used e-cigarettes in the last 30 days had also smoked traditional cigarettes. TEROC is concerned that e-cigarettes are being used as a gateway to smoking traditional cigarettes for youths and young adults, who are particularly vulnerable to the harms of nicotine addiction. TEROC is committed to preventing the initiation of tobacco use, especially for minors and young adults. Sampling regulations would deter youth from using e-cigarettes and decrease nicotine addiction.

California has been a leader in the fight against tobacco for the past 25 years with one of the lowest smoking rates in the nation. However, unrestricted marketing, enticing flavors, easy access, and the risk of e-cigarettes and other tobacco products as a gateway into nicotine addiction undermine California's progress with tobacco-free social norms, and the State's long-term and successful efforts to de-normalizing smoking.

For these reasons, TEROC supports legislation and regulation restricting the sampling of e-cigarettes and other tobacco products to protect the public from the dangers of these products.

If you have any questions regarding this subject, please do not hesitate to contact me at MOng@Mednet.ucla.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Ong', is positioned above the typed name.

Michael Ong, M.D., Ph.D.
Chairperson