

Good morning,

Attached is a letter from the American Heart Association of Greater San Diego regarding the upcoming flavored tobacco ordinance being heard next Tuesday (Agenda Item 8.2). This ordinance is a critical step to protecting Chula Vista's children, Communities of Color, and LGBTQ+ Community from nicotine addiction and tobacco-related disease and death. **We urge you to support this ordinance.**

Thank you,



Chelsea Walczak Vircks, MPH, CHES

Senior Director, Community Impact

American Heart Association

9404 Genesee Ave, Suite 240

San Diego, CA 92037

O: 858.410.3848

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Emergencies don't stop for COVID-19. Call 9-1-1 at the [first sign of heart attack, stroke, or cardiac arrest](#) to save lives.



September 8, 2022

Chula Vista City Council
Chula Vista City Hall
8130 Allison Avenue, La Mesa, CA 91942

Greater San Diego Division

9404 Genesee Avenue
Suite 240
San Diego, CA 92037

Board of Directors
2022-2023

Chair of the Board
Juli Moran Thirtle, MBA
Deloitte

President of the Board
Ramón Hernandez, DrPH, MPH
UC San Diego

Immediate Past-Chair
Yameeka J. Williams, FACHE
Kaiser Permanente

Immediate Past-President
Robert Stein, MD, FACC, FAHA
Graybill Medical Group

Directors-at-Large
Debbie Day, MBA
Nancy Greengold, MD, MBA
Natalie Hawryluk, PhD
Andrew Ho, MD, FACC
Steven Hooker, PhD
Tommy Le, MHA
Joe Lo Duca, MBA, MPH
Gene Ma, MD, FACEP
Linda Naviaux Niggli
Ajay Srivastava, MD
Ernesto Villanueva, EdD
Matthew Zubiller
David Zumaya, MS

Executive Director
Jessica Newmyer

Dear Mayor Salas and City Council Members,

The American Heart Association is deeply concerned with the high rates of tobacco use among kids and adults driven by fruit, mint, and candy-flavored tobacco products. Ending the sale of flavored tobacco gives Chula Vista the opportunity to protect all residents including kids, communities of color, and the LGBTQ+ community from the dire effects of tobacco use and nicotine addiction. **Therefore, we urge you to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products, without exemptions.**

With nearly 24 percent of high school students now reporting tobacco use, the need for a strong policy ending the sale of flavored tobacco is clear. The tobacco industry is actively and aggressively working to addict new users with easy access to minty, sweet and candy-flavored tobacco products. All flavored tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, menthol cigarettes, and cigars come in kid-friendly flavors and are highly addicting.

Cigarette smoking is still the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, claiming on average 480,000 lives each year. Smoking increases the risk for heart disease and stroke and the risk for blood clots. The best way to prevent tobacco-related illness and death is to prevent people from starting to smoke in the first place. Ending the sale of flavored tobacco products will reduce access to the products that are the tobacco industry's key strategy for targeting and addicting new smokers.

Although Senate Bill 793 passed with bipartisan support and a signature from the Governor in 2020, tobacco companies spent more than \$20 million to place the law on hold until the next statewide general election. Chula Vista kids can't wait to be protected - local action will protect the community now and address the urgent issue of youth tobacco use. Every day we delay is a day that Big Tobacco will use mint, fruit, and candy-flavored tobacco to addict more life-long customers.

Over 120 communities across California protect their residents from nicotine addiction and tobacco-related death and disease by prohibiting the sale of flavored tobacco products. Chula Vista kids deserve these same protections. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Juli Moran, MBA
Chair, Board of Directors
Greater San Diego Division, American Heart Association