

## Communication from Public

**Name:** PAVe- Parents Against Vaping E-Cigarettes

**Date Submitted:** 02/04/2022 01:45 PM

**Council File No:** 18-1104

**Comments for Public Posting:** February 4, 2022 Re: Council File: 18-1104 Flavored Tobacco Products and OUR KIDS Dear Mayor Garcetti and City of Los Angeles Councilmembers, As two cofounders of Parents Against Vaping E-cigarettes (PAVe), a national organization founded in 2018 by three moms as a grassroots response to the youth vaping epidemic, we write today to express our strong support for ending the sale of all flavored e-cigarettes and all other FLAVORED tobacco products in Los Angeles, with no exemptions. PAVe is among the dedicated number of L.A. Families Fighting Flavored Tobacco coalition members ready to support your efforts to protect Los Angeles's kids by ending the sale of flavored tobacco. PAVe's passionate parent volunteers have been advocating against the sale of flavored tobacco legislation not only in Los Angeles but across California, participating in successful legislative campaigns in San Francisco (Proposition C), Sacramento, San Jose, and the County of Los Angeles; in and at the state level where we helped pass SB 793, which is now on hold due to Big Tobacco's despicable referendum. We are grateful to serve as important partners for California's county, city, and state tobacco prevention coalitions. According to the 2021 National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS), over 2 million young people are currently vaping, and the research has proven that flavors are hooking our kids. The latest figures show that 8 out of 10 teens who vape choose flavors. With 40% of high-school users using an e-cigarette on 20 or more days out of the month, we must take action immediately to protect these teens from becoming an entire generation of nicotine addicts. This past September, Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer submitted a draft ordinance to the City Council which proposes ending the sale of tobacco products, including menthol and e-cigarettes. However, it includes an exemption that would still allow the sale of flavored hookah. This exemption will create health inequity, injustice, and more young people start a lifelong addiction to nicotine while being touted as a social or cultural activity by hookah industry lobbyists. Hookah Hooks Youth A report published by Data Bridge Market Research published on January 13, 2022, stated, "Various flavor offerings with shisha tobacco and widespread adoption by the various themed restaurants as well as the youth population has been directly impacting the growth of shisha tobacco market."

Variety of flavor offerings in shisha tobacco is one of the major driving factors as a large portion of the youth are willing to take up flavored smoking.” Protect Youth and BIPOC Communities

The tobacco industry has continued to publicly distort the intention of this council and the work of our coalition by inferring that any local tobacco ordinance would “criminalize the Black community” should the ending of the sale of menthol-flavored cigarettes be enacted. Our coalition humbly requests an amendment to the definition of ‘tobacco retailer’ to more specifically designate the tobacco retailer as an entity lawfully permitted to sell tobacco products or an entity that has a valid tobacco retailer’s permit. An amendment of this nature would clarify intent, which is that the ordinance regulates the sale of flavored tobacco, not the possession of flavored tobacco. It should be clear that any interpretation, particularly by law enforcement agencies, that the flavored tobacco ordinance is not directed at individual Angelenos. We urge the City Council to take swift action and schedule a hearing of the ordinance at an upcoming meeting of the Arts, Parks, Health, Education, and Neighborhoods Committee. We proudly join the L.A. Families Fighting Flavored Tobacco Coalition in standing up to Big Tobacco to save lives, reduce health risks among some of our most vulnerable populations, and be a model for California and the rest of the country to emulate. For these reasons, we are proud to advocate for a strong tobacco retail license ordinance in Los Angeles that includes a comprehensive ordinance that includes hookah, e-cigarettes, and ALL flavored tobacco products. Please provide the kids of Los Angeles with the same protections enjoyed by the kids in many other surrounding municipalities. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact PAVe Co-Founders Dorian Fuhrman and Meredith Berkman at (917) 783-5438. Sincerely, Dorian Fuhrman and Meredith Berkman Co-Founders PAVe [www.parentsagainstvaping.org](http://www.parentsagainstvaping.org)



January 24, 2022

Re: Council File: 18-1104

Flavored Tobacco Products and OUR KIDS

Dear Mayor Garcetti and City of Los Angeles Councilmembers,

As two cofounders of Parents Against Vaping E-cigarettes (PAVe), a national organization founded in 2018 by three moms as a grassroots response to the youth vaping epidemic, we write today to express our strong support for **ending the sale of all flavored e-cigarettes and all other FLAVORED tobacco products in Los Angeles, with no exemptions.** PAVe is among the dedicated number of L.A. Families Fighting Flavored Tobacco coalition members ready to support your efforts to protect Los Angeles's kids by ending the sale of flavored tobacco.

PAVe's passionate parent volunteers have been advocating against the sale of flavored tobacco legislation not only in Los Angeles but across California, participating in successful legislative campaigns in San Francisco (Proposition C), Sacramento, San Jose, and the County of Los Angeles; in and at the state level where we helped pass SB 793, which is now on hold due to Big Tobacco's despicable referendum. We are grateful to serve as important partners for California's county, city, and state tobacco prevention coalitions.

According to the 2021 National Youth Tobacco Survey (NYTS), over 2 million young people are currently vaping, and the research has proven that flavors are hooking our kids. The latest figures show that 8 out of 10 teens who vape choose flavors. With 40% of high-school users using an e-cigarette on 20 or more days out of the month, we must take action immediately to protect these teens from becoming an entire generation of nicotine addicts.

This past September, Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer submitted a draft ordinance to the City Council which proposes ending the sale of tobacco products, including menthol and e-cigarettes. However, it includes an exemption that would still allow the sale of flavored hookah. This exemption will create health inequity, injustice, and more young people start a lifelong addiction to nicotine while being touted as a social or cultural activity by hookah industry lobbyists.

### **Hookah Hooks Youth**

A report published by Data Bridge Market Research published on January 13, 2022, stated, "Various flavor offerings with shisha tobacco and widespread adoption by the various themed restaurants as well as the **youth population has been directly impacting the growth of shisha tobacco market. Variety of flavor offerings in shisha tobacco is one of the major driving factors as a large portion of the youth are willing to take up flavored smoking.**"

### **Protect Youth and BIPOC Communities**

The tobacco industry has continued to publicly distort the intention of this council and the work of our coalition by inferring that any local tobacco ordinance would "criminalize the Black community" should the ending of the sale of menthol-flavored cigarettes be enacted.

Our coalition humbly requests an amendment to the definition of 'tobacco retailer' to more specifically designate the tobacco retailer as an entity lawfully permitted to sell tobacco products or an entity that has a valid tobacco retailer's permit. An amendment of this nature would clarify intent, which is that the ordinance regulates the sale of flavored tobacco, not the possession of flavored tobacco. It should be clear that any interpretation, particularly by law enforcement agencies, that the flavored tobacco ordinance is not directed at individual Angelenos.

We urge the City Council to take swift action and schedule a hearing of the ordinance at an upcoming meeting of the Arts, Parks, Health, Education, and Neighborhoods Committee.

We proudly join the L.A. Families Fighting Flavored Tobacco Coalition in standing up to Big Tobacco to save lives, reduce

health risks among some of our most vulnerable populations, and be a model for California and the rest of the country to emulate.

For these reasons, we are proud to advocate for a strong tobacco retail license ordinance in Los Angeles that includes a **comprehensive ordinance that includes hookah, e-cigarettes, and ALL flavored tobacco products**. Please provide the kids of Los Angeles with the same protections enjoyed by the kids in many other surrounding municipalities. Should you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact PAVe Co-Founders Dorian Fuhrman and Meredith Berkman at (917) 783-5438.

Sincerely,

Dorian Fuhrman and Meredith Berkman

Co-Founders PAVe

[www.parentsagainstvaping.org](http://www.parentsagainstvaping.org)