



**American Cancer Society
Cancer Action Network**
1755 Abbey Road
East Lansing, MI 48823
517.332.2222
www.acscan.org

October 22, 2019

The Honorable Michael Webber, Chairman
House Committee on Regulatory Reform
124 North Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Mr. Chairman,

As the government relations director for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, I urge you and members of the committee to vote no on House Bill 5019. This legislation is reckless and sets a dangerous precedent by limiting what the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) can do to protect the public's health. This bill goes against the very mission of MDHHS and does so during an ever growing epidemic of youth e-cigarette use outbreak of lung injury associated with e-cigarette use or "vaping."

E-cigarette use soared by 78 percent among high school students and 48 percent among middle school students nationwide from 2017-2018. More than 3.6 million high-school and middle-school students used e-cigarettes last year – an increase of 1.5 million over the previous year – and public health authorities warn that these numbers likely have continued to rise. As of October 15, 2019, 1,479 lung injury cases associated with the use of e-cigarette, or "vaping" products have been reported to CDC and 33 deaths have been confirmed. The current situation demands strong policies that are proven to reduce tobacco use rather than limiting the authority of the one entity in the state charged with protecting public health and preventing disease.

Legislation that would define e-cigarettes as tobacco products, as the federal government does, would protect the entire Michigan population from these highly addictive products. House Bill 5019 does nothing to reverse the youth epidemic of e-cigarette use and prevent future generations from a lifelong addiction to tobacco products nor does it do anything to help anyone break this addiction. Those behind this legislation fail to see the larger, sweeping, implications of restricting the authority of MDHHS and the long-term impact this bill will have beyond the current emergency rule restricting the sale of flavored e-cigarettes.

Mr. Chairman, I implore you and your committee to take an in depth look at the overall issues surrounding tobacco use, including the use of electronic cigarettes and pass legislation to regulate e-cigarettes as tobacco products including taxing them as tobacco products, prohibit the use of e-cigarettes wherever smoking is prohibited, restrict the sale

of all flavored tobacco products including menthol cigarettes and as suggested by the tobacco community, raise the age of sale for all tobacco products from 18 to 21. We stand ready to work with all that are willing to work on these objectives in good faith. In the meantime, we urge you to oppose House Bill 5019 and allow MDHHS to continue to work to protect public health. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this legislation before you today.

Respectfully,



Andrew R. Schepers

Michigan Government Relations Director

c: Members of the Michigan House Committee on Regulatory Reform
The Honorable Lee Chatfield, Speaker of the House