



# City of Encinitas

Office of  
The Mayor

June 2, 2020

The Honorable Jerry Hill  
Senator, 13<sup>th</sup> District  
State Capitol, Room 5035  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re.: Senate Bill 793

**Catherine S. Blakespear**  
Mayor

Dear Senator Hill:

On behalf of the City of Encinitas, I am writing to express our support for SB 793, which will help protect youth from the harms of flavored tobacco products.

**Kellie Shay Hinze**  
Deputy Mayor

We are in the midst of an e-cigarette epidemic of unparalleled proportions. Tobacco companies have pushed candy-flavored products into the youth market, quietly hooking kids into a dangerous addiction to nicotine. Recognizing this, the City of Encinitas is in the process of creating an ordinance that would ban flavored tobacco within our City.

**Tony Kranz**  
Council Member

Current events have highlighted these dangers. There is growing evidence that smokers are at a greater risk of hospitalization and severe illness due to COVID-19, placing smokers in the high-risk category. Smoking increases the risk for respiratory infections, weakens the immune system and is a major cause of a number of chronic health conditions, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease and diabetes. In addition, there is growing evidence that vaping can also harm lung health. These factors put smokers, and in all likelihood vapers as well, at greater risk when confronted with the coronavirus.

**Joe Mosca**  
Council Member

Long before this novel coronavirus arrived, California youth were being sentenced to a lifetime of addiction as the skyrocketing youth use of e-cigarettes swept the nation. In November 2018, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported a dramatic increase in youth nicotine use, leading the Surgeon General and the FDA to declare youth e-cigarette use an epidemic in the United States. The disturbing rates of teen e-cigarette use continued to rise in 2019, with more than 1 in 4 high school students and more than 1 in 10 middle school students using e-cigarettes. Altogether, more than 5.3 million youth were current e-cigarette users in 2019, with the overwhelming majority of youth citing use of popular fruit and menthol or mint flavors.

**Jody Hubbard**  
Council Member

81 percent of young people who have ever used tobacco started with a flavored product. These products often mimic popular candies, drinks, or snacks in both packaging and flavor, making them particularly appealing to youth. A variety of flavored tobacco products like cotton candy, bubble gum, and mango are widely available on retail shelves. 72 percent of youth tobacco users have used a flavored tobacco product in the past month and at least two-thirds of youth tobacco users report using tobacco products "because they come in flavors I like."

**Karen P. Brust**  
City Manager

With the surges in youth nicotine usage and associated public health risks, California needs to take swift action. While the FDA recently announced a partial ban on certain flavored electronic cigarette products, the policy does not go far enough to protect the health and safety of California children by making dangerous exemptions. It is time for California to lead the nation by passing SB 793 to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products.

For these reasons, we are proud to support SB 793. Should you have any questions about our position on this legislation, please do not hesitate to contact Patrick Piatt at 760-633-2613 or [ppiatt@encinitasca.gov](mailto:ppiatt@encinitasca.gov).

Sincerely,

Catherine S. Blakespear  
Mayor