

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 4, 2019

CONTACT
Theresa Spinner tspinner@naccho.org (NACCHO)
Liz Voyles, liz@brassrc.com (BCHC)

Local Health Departments Call for Bold Action to Protect All Youth from E-Cigarettes

“No child, whether raised in San Francisco, New York City, or the Mississippi Delta, should remain prey to this epidemic”

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO) and the [Big Cities Health Coalition](#) (BCHC), who represent the nation’s nearly 3,000 local health departments, and 30 of the country’s largest, most urban health departments, respectively, sent a letter to the President reiterating their strong support for bold action to address the youth vaping crisis and highlighting the important role and perspective of public health officials in any efforts to identify policy solutions to this critical issue.

An excerpt from the letter, sent by Lori Tremmel Freeman, MBA, Chief Executive Officer NACCHO, and Chrissie Juliano, MPP Executive Director Big Cities Health Coalition is below:

We appreciate that bold action will be needed to reverse the epidemic and fully support the Administration’s plan to clear the market of all flavored e-cigarettes, including mint and menthol flavors, from all retailers, as you have suggested on numerous occasions since September 11, 2019. On behalf of our members, we urge you and the Administration to swiftly adopt these and other measures to address the youth vaping crisis and to support local communities in addressing tobacco use across the board.

Local health officials (along with state health officials) are key partners in any discussions related to tobacco prevention and control to share an on-the-ground report of the impact of vaping to communities across the country, as well as provide examples of innovative policies and practices that are working in communities.

As the local community health strategists, health departments are tackling this issue through both programmatic and policy channels. They work with schools and parents to employ best practices to curb youth use of these products, and to help those who are addicted to quit. They are also key advisors who help shape and inform local tobacco-related policies, including local laws about where these products can be used, the legal purchasing age, and the local availability of flavored tobacco products. As of October 1, 2019, a total of 139 municipalities across the country have enacted laws restricting flavored tobacco sales in some manner. Of those municipalities, 34 currently prohibit the sales of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol, without exception. And, in light of the current youth vaping epidemic, many other localities have additional flavor restrictions in the pipeline. While these are impressive numbers, we will only be successful in addressing the youth

vaping epidemic through a coordinated, national approach, that protects all Americans from the dangers of nicotine addiction.

As the youth e-cigarette epidemic continues to grow and over 5 million children are currently using e-cigarettes, the time for action is now. We urge the Administration to swiftly implement its plan to clear the market of all flavored e-cigarettes, without any carve-out for particular retailers. While some local governments have moved to restrict e-cigarettes in their communities, the majority of the country is still vulnerable to its harmful effects. No child, whether raised in San Francisco, New York City, or the Mississippi Delta, should remain prey to this epidemic.

[Full text of the letter can be found here.](#)

About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit www.naccho.org.

About BCHC

The Big Cities Health Coalition is a forum for the leaders of America's largest metropolitan health departments to exchange strategies and jointly address issues to promote and protect the health and safety of their residents. Collectively, BCHC member jurisdictions directly impact more than 62 million people, or one in five Americans.
<http://www.bigcitieshealth.org/>