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Since 1908, Breathe California has fought for clean air, healthy lungs and the elimination of lung disease in the San Francisco Bay Area.

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BREATHE[®]
CALIFORNIA
Golden Gate Public Health Partnership

July 22, 2019

Richmond City Council and Clerk
440 Civic Center Plaza
Richmond, CA 94084

Suspending the Sale of E-Cigarettes Until FDA Approval

Dear Mayor Butt, Vice Mayor Choi, Councilmembers Bates, Johnson, Martinez, Myrick, and Wills, and Clerk Christian:

Breathe California works to fight lung disease, and we are part of the Contra Costa County Tobacco Prevention Coalition. We regularly work with youth throughout the Bay Area, including in recent years at Sheldon and at Verde.

Given the new youth tobacco epidemic, spurred in large part by e-cigarettes which are not yet approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, we would like to point to the likely population health benefits, especially for youth, of suspending the sales in Richmond of those e-cigarette products that have not been approved.

Research from 2018 in the journal *PLoS One*, estimating the future impact of electronic cigarettes on the U.S. population using existing survey data from past years, estimates that for every one adult who may move away from regular cigarettes to electronic cigarettes, approximately 80 youth or young adults may be recruited into smoking cigarettes through the use of electronic cigarettes. Other research, such as in *JAMA Internal Medicine* even as early as 2015, has also pointed to likely potential for negative population health impacts of e-cigarettes being on the market in the U.S. Of course, e-cigarettes have only been on the U.S. market since about 2007 – too early for long-term studies to be out, but already long enough for researchers to understand the many negative impacts of e-cigarette exhaust on the health of lungs and other systems of the body.

Importantly, this means about two busloads of young people may be recruited into regular smoking for every adult who may move off, according to this current research estimate. These children will then grow into adults who smoke regularly.

Meanwhile, many of the public claims by e-cigarette companies are not yet substantiated -- these products have not been approved by the Food and Drug Administration, and e-cigarette companies largely have not submitted applications for such products.

We recognize Richmond has already been a leader in dealing with flavors in tobacco products. Since the tobacco industry pursues many additional tactics to get youth to use tobacco, including working to make youth underestimate the health impacts of e-cigarettes through marketing, advertising, and other public messaging, we believe there is likely a justified and positive impact to youth health if Richmond were to suspend the sales of e-cigarettes that have not yet received Food and Drug Administration approval.

Sincerely,

Randy Uang

Director of Tobacco Prevention & Control Services
Breathe California, Golden Gate Public Health Partnership