



TOBACCO FREE KANSAS COALITION

Written Testimony in Support of
HB 2324
Before the House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee
February 8, 2012

Representative Colloton and Members of the Committee:

Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition and its partners stand in support of HB 2324, which would include electronic cigarettes under the Kansas law pertaining to cigarettes and tobacco products. The bill is set up to protect children and youth from easy access to such products. This bill would ensure that minors would not be able to easily purchase or use such items. Because these products are self-described as containing nicotine, the addictive component of cigarettes and tobacco products, they can introduce young people to an addiction that may lead them to use other tobacco products and to the diseases and sometimes early death caused by tobacco.

However, the tobacco industry is continuing to develop new and varied products that feature the nicotine that comes from tobacco. Currently, electronic hookah devices are also being advertised. Other products that have become available are nicotine water, nicotine-flavored orbs (looking very much like candy), and nicotine-flavored dissolvable strips. These other tobacco-related products should also be reviewed for possible inclusion in the Kansas cigarette and tobacco products law.

A legislative review of the current definitions in the cigarette and tobacco products law could possible lead to a more comprehensive approach to all of these new products, whose use can continue an addiction that for most people starts before they are legally allowed to buy them.

Other concerns to be addressed with such a review would be whether such products should be taxed as tobacco, whether they can be sold in kiosks in shopping malls, or whether a license is required for their sale.

Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition partners stand ready to assist in providing further information. Thank you for your commitment to help curtail tobacco use by Kansas youth. Tobacco use is still the single most preventable cause of death in our country, and medical treatment for tobacco-related diseases is a major reason for the increasing costs of health care in the state and in the Medicaid system.

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