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## Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida's Statement Regarding JUUL Labs, Inc. Congressional Hearing



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**TALLAHASSEE, FLA.** – On July 25, the United States House of Representatives Oversight and Reform Committee's Economic and Consumer Policy Subcommittee concluded a two-day hearing to examine JUUL's role in the youth e-cigarette epidemic.

Youth vaping has increased dramatically across the country and in Florida. In 2018, one in four Florida high school students reported current e-cigarette use – an astounding 58% increase compared to 2017.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, only about 4% of adults in Florida are using e-cigarettes.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, a Stanford University School of Medicine study analyzed JUUL's marketing campaign between JUUL's launch in 2015 and 2018, including thousands of Instagram posts, emails and ads, and concluded that JUUL's marketing "was patently youth-oriented."<sup>3</sup>

The JUUL comes in a variety of flavors, is easy to conceal,<sup>4,5</sup> and delivers high levels of nicotine,<sup>6</sup> which is highly addictive.<sup>7</sup> While JUUL claims to doubt the dangers of nicotine, it is proven that youth may be more sensitive to nicotine and feel dependent on nicotine sooner compared to adults.<sup>8,9,10</sup> The brain continues to develop until the early to mid-20s and the developing brain is more vulnerable to the negative effects of nicotine. Evidence also suggests that youth who use e-cigarettes may be at greater risk of starting to smoke regular cigarettes.<sup>11,12,13,14</sup>

In December 2018, Marlboro cigarette maker Altria Group Inc. purchased a 35% stake in JUUL Labs Inc. for \$12.8 billion.<sup>15</sup> We do not know what Big Tobacco's involvement means for the future of e-cigarettes. But, we do know that Big Tobacco cannot be trusted. In a landmark 2006 judgement, a U.S District Judge found that the major U.S. tobacco companies violated civil racketeering laws (RICO) for conspiring over decades to deceive the American public about the health effects of smoking, the addictiveness of nicotine, and their marketing to youth.<sup>16</sup>

"Florida has made great progress in youth tobacco prevention over the past two decades. Today, fewer youth than ever are smoking regular cigarettes,"<sup>17</sup> said Bureau Chief of Tobacco Free Florida, Laura Corbin. "We cannot allow an industry that lied to the public for decades to erase the progress we have made. Getting accurate information into the hands of our citizens is the first step we must take to reverse these alarming trends."

The Florida Department of Health's Tobacco Free Florida program remains a trusted resource for credible information about the youth vaping epidemic and the harmful effects of youth e-cigarette use. Unlike JUUL, the program's top priority is to protect future generations from a lifetime of nicotine addiction.

In April 2019, Tobacco Free Florida launched a statewide initiative in an effort to help provide parents, educators, pediatricians and medical professionals, and other partners with the latest facts on vaping. Additionally, campaigns designed to educate parents and youth about e-cigarettes – particularly the popular brand JUUL – are currently running statewide via digital channels. Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT), Florida's statewide youth advocacy organization, launched a statewide initiative called "Not A Lab Rat" to educate its peers about e-cigarettes. Tobacco Free Florida's youth prevention campaign, THE FACTS NOW, has also launched social media campaigns to educate teens and young adults across the state about e-cigarettes and nicotine addiction.

Parents, teachers and others who influence youth are encouraged to advise and inform them of the dangers of nicotine; discourage youth tobacco use in any form, including e-cigarettes; and set a positive example by being tobacco free themselves.<sup>18</sup> For more information, please visit [tobaccofreeflorida.com/epidemic](http://tobaccofreeflorida.com/epidemic).

It is important to note that e-cigarettes are not a smoking cessation method approved by the FDA. There are seven FDA-approved cessation aids and medications that are proven safe and effective when used as directed.<sup>19</sup> Tobacco Free Florida offers free, proven-effective tools and services to help Florida residents quit tobacco use through its Quit Your Way program. For more information, visit [tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway](http://tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway) or call 1-877-U-CAN-NOW (1-877-822-6669).

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### **About Tobacco Free Florida**

The Florida Department of Health's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Since the program began in 2007, more than 212,000 Floridians have successfully quit using one of Tobacco Free Florida's free tools and services. There are now approximately 451,000 fewer adult smokers in Florida than there was 10 years ago, and the state has saved \$17.7 billion in health care costs.<sup>20</sup> To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way services, visit [www.tobaccofreeflorida.com](http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com) or follow the campaign on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida](http://www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida) or on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla](http://www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla).

### **Editor's Note:**

The Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida is charged with addressing tobacco products, but we feel it is important to note that e-cigarette devices, including JUUL and products that resemble JUUL, can be used to deliver marijuana. Our information and resources focus on e-cigarette devices that deliver nicotine.

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- <sup>4</sup> Truth Initiative. "Nearly 1 in 5 youth say they have seen JUUL used in school." 23 May 2018. truthinitiative.org/news/nearly-1-5-youth-say-they-have-seen-juul-used-school (Accessed 8 March 2019)
- <sup>5</sup> Zernike, Kate. "'I Can't Stop': Schools Struggle With Vaping Explosion." *The New York Times*. 2 April 2018. www.nytimes.com/2018/04/02/health/vaping-ecigarettes-addiction-teen.html (Accessed 8 March 2019)
- <sup>6</sup> CDC Newsroom Releases. "Sales of JUUL e-cigarettes skyrocket, posing danger to youth." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2 Oct. 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2018/p1002-e-Cigarettes-sales-danger-youth.html> (Accessed 8 March 2019)
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- <sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking: 50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014. Printed with corrections, January 2014.
- <sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2012.
- <sup>11</sup> Berry KM, Fetterman JL, Benjamin EJ, et al. Association of Electronic Cigarette Use With Subsequent Initiation of Tobacco Cigarettes in US Youths. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2019;2(2):e187794. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2018.7794
- <sup>12</sup> Miech R, Patrick ME, O'Malley PM, et al E-cigarette use as a predictor of cigarette smoking: results from a 1-year follow-up of a national sample of 12th grade students *Tobacco Control* 2017;26:e106-e111.
- <sup>13</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2018. Public Health Consequences of E-Cigarettes. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/24952>.
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- <sup>16</sup> USA v. Philip Morris USA, Inc., et al. (Civil Action No. 99-2496 (GK), August 17, 2006).
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