

COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA
OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



SUSAN ELLENBERG

September 13, 2019

I support the proposal submitted by Councilmember Carrasco to ban e-cigarettes and flavored tobacco products in San Jose to combat to the sharp rise in youth vaping and flavored tobacco use we are seeing across Santa Clara County. According to a [study](#) funded by the Santa Clara County Public Health Department nearly 1 in 3 teens in Santa Clara County have tried vaping¹. Flavored tobacco products and vaping are intentionally marketed towards youth and communities of color.

The survey also found:

- 13.2 percent of Santa Clara County teens reported using e-cigarettes in the past month, meaning they were counted as current users
- Nearly 1 in 3 Santa Clara County teens – 31.6 percent – report that they have used an e-cigarette at least once
- 82.3 percent of teens currently using tobacco reported using a flavored product: use of flavored products was widespread across all tobacco products and all demographic categories
- More than 2 in 5 teens – 45.4 percent – reported purchasing their own e-cigarettes, with over a quarter of this group saying they buy them directly from a local store. Among those who purchased e-cigarettes in a local store, 62.5 percent purchased them at a vape shop

Additionally, the proposed policy seeks to address the overconcentration of tobacco outlets in lower income neighborhoods can help address the historical targeting of communities of color by the tobacco industry and ongoing disparities in tobacco-related disease. In San Jose, more than 1 in 4 stores that sell tobacco products are located within 2 blocks of a school. Exposure to tobacco marketing has been shown to impact tobacco use initiation among youth, especially when stores are

¹ Zhu S-H, Lee J, Zhuang YL, Braden K, Cole A, Wolfson T, Gamst A (2019). Tobacco use among high school students in Santa Clara County: Findings from the 2017-18 California Student Tobacco Survey. San Diego, CA: Center for Research and Intervention in Tobacco Control, University of California, San Diego. Accessed from: <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/phd/hi/tf/Pages/tobacco-free-home.aspx>

close to schools. Multiple studies have shown that youth are more likely to smoke when they live or go to school in neighborhoods with a high concentration of tobacco retailers. This policy could restrict new tobacco retailers from being located within 1,000 feet of schools and other youth-sensitive areas, such as community centers, parks, and libraries.

Santa Clara County was one of the first jurisdictions in the nation to restrict the sale of flavored tobacco and e-cigarettes, but much of the work to implement evidence-based policies to reduce exposure to tobacco and e-cigarettes falls to our City partners. Proactive policies like this proposal are critical to supporting the health of your youth and knitting together aligned policies across jurisdictions.

Please support this proposal so that we can together address the high use of vaping and tobacco products by youth across our County.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the County Supervisor.

County Supervisor Susan Ellenberg

A black rectangular redaction box covering the contact information of the County Supervisor.

Cc: San José City Clerk