

**Testimony before the Vermont House Committee on Human Services
Regarding Banning the Sale of Flavored Tobacco and Vapor Products
Lindsey Stroud, Senior Fellow
Taxpayers Protection Alliance
January 10, 2024**

Chairwoman Wood, Vice-Chairwoman Brumsted, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your time today to discuss banning flavors tobacco and vapor products. My name is Lindsey Stroud and I'm a Senior Fellow at the Taxpayers Protection Alliance (TPA). TPA is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to educating the public through the research, analysis, and dissemination of information on the government's effects on the economy.

While addressing youth use of age-restricted products is laudable, lawmakers must refrain from prohibitionist bans on both products that adults responsibly consume and on products that may help adults quit smoking. Youth use of traditional tobacco products has reached record lows, while youth vaping has halved in recent years. Bans will only force adult consumers to seek out illicit products from clandestine sources, which may cause more harm.

Key Points:

- Vermont youth use of traditional tobacco products is at record lows and youth vaping has declined since peaking in 2019.
- In 2021 (among Vermont high school students), 16.1 percent were currently using vapor products, 5.4 percent were currently smoking combustible cigarettes, three percent were currently smoking cigars, and 2.8 percent were currently using smokeless tobacco products.
- Between 1993 and 2021, current smoking use declined by 83.9 percent. Between 1999 and 2021, current cigar use declined by 79.5 percent. Between 2017 and 2021, current smokeless tobacco product use decreased by 46.2 percent.
- Youth vaping peaked in 2019 in Vermont when 49.8 percent of high schoolers reported ever-trying an e-cigarette and 26.4 percent reported current use.
- Between 2019 and 2021, lifetime use declined by 33.1 percent to 33.3 percent of students. Current use decreased by 39 percent to 16.1 percent of Vermont high school students.
- In 2021 (among Vermont middle school students), 4.5 percent were currently using vapor products, 1.2 percent were currently smoking combustible cigarettes, 0.8 percent were currently smokeless tobacco products, and 0.7 percent were currently using cigars.
- Between 2011 and 2021, current smoking rates declined by 63.6 percent, current smokeless tobacco use declined by 55.6 percent, and current cigar use decreased by 66.7 percent.

- In 2019, 15.5 percent of Vermont middle schoolers reported ever-trying an e-cigarette and 7.8 percent were currently vaping.
- Between 2019 and 2021, lifetime use declined by 40.6 percent to 9.2 percent of students. Current use decreased by 42.3 percent to 4.5 percent of Vermont middle school students.
- More adults are using combustible cigarettes and vapor products than Vermont youth.
- For every one high schooler student smoking in 2021 in Vermont, more than 58 adults were currently smoking. For every one high schooler vaping in 2021 in Vermont, more than six adults were using e-cigarettes.
- Vermont lawmakers are not limiting adult access to other age-restricted products Vermont youth are more likely to use, including alcohol and marijuana.
- In 2021 (among Vermont high school students), 24.6 percent had reported currently using alcohol, 19.9 percent were currently using marijuana, and 12.1 percent reported current binge drinking.
- Vermont youth are not using e-cigarettes because of flavors.
- In 2021 (among Vermont high school students who were currently using e-cigarettes), flavors were the second-least cited reason for using e-cigarettes, with only three percent of students reporting using them because of flavors.
- Conversely, 32 percent of Vermont high school students who were using e-cigarettes cited using them to get a buzz and/or high, 30 percent had used them to treat feelings of anxiety, depression and/or stress, and 13 percent reported using them because of curiosity.
- In previous state surveys, flavors were not the main reasons for using e-cigarettes.
- In Vermont (in 2021), among high school students that were current e-cigarette users, only 10 percent of youth that used e-cigarettes cited flavors as a primary reason for using e-cigarettes, while 17 percent of Vermont high school students reported using e-cigarettes because their family and/or friends used them and 51 percent cited other.
- In 2021 (among middle and high school students that were currently using e-cigarettes), 43.4 percent had used them because of feelings of anxiety, stress and/or depression, compared to 13.2 percent who had cited using them because of flavors.
- In 2022, 13 percent of Vermont adults were currently smoking cigarettes, which was a 12.2 percent decrease from 2021 and represents 9,032 fewer adults smoking. White adults accounted for 73.8 percent of the state's current smoking population. More than one-fourth (25.9 percent) of adults who earned \$25,000 or less were currently smoking in 2022, compared to only 6.3 percent of adults earning \$50,000 or more per year.
- In 2022, 6.2 percent of Vermont adults were currently using e-cigarettes, which was a 24 percent increase from 2021 and represents 6,573 additional adults vaping. In 2022, 57 percent of adult e-cigarette users in Vermont were 25 years or older.
- In three of four states with current flavored tobacco and vape bans, smoking rates among young adults increased, while nationally, they decreased on average.
- An illicit market is thriving on internet marketplaces from New York City to California.
- Vermont youth are facing an increasing mental health crisis.

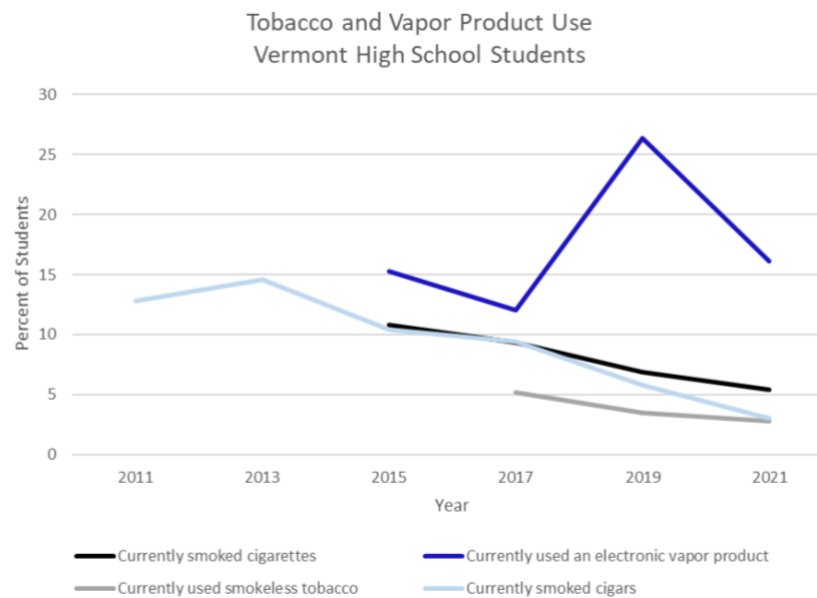
- According to the *2022 Kids Count Data Book* from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the percentage of Vermont youth aged three to 17 years old that had ever been diagnosed with anxiety or depression by a medical professional increased by 40 percent, from 13.7 percent of Vermont youth in 2016 to 19.2 percent in 2020.
- In 2021 (among Vermont high school students), 29.6 percent reported persistent feelings of sadness and/or hopelessness, 13.8 percent had made a suicide plan in the past 12 months, and 6.9 percent had attempted suicide in the year prior. Between 2019, and 2021, while youth tobacco and vapor product was declining, suicidal thoughts and attempts increased by three percent and 6.2 percent, respectively.
- Vermont youth overdoses are increasing, often caused by illicit products disguised to look like real products.
- The percent of Vermonters aged 24 years or younger who had visited an emergency room due to an unintentional drug overdose increased by 526 percent, from 64 visits in 2019 to 425 in 2022.
- Vermont woefully underfunds tobacco control programs.
- In 2022, Vermont collected more than \$83 million in cigarette taxes and tobacco settlement payments, yet allocated only \$2.5 million in state funding towards tobacco control programs, including cessation efforts, education, and youth prevention. In 2022, for every \$1 the state received in tobacco monies, it spent only \$0.03 on tobacco control efforts.

Vermont Tobacco Product Use at Record Lows, Vapor Product Use Steadily Declining

Nationally, youth vaping has halved since 2019 and youth use of traditional tobacco products. In 2021, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), tobacco product use is at record lows among Vermont youth.¹

In 2021, among Vermont high school students:

- 16.1 percent were currently using e-cigarettes and/or vapor products
- 5.4 percent were currently using combustible cigarettes
- Three percent were currently using cigars
- 2.8 percent were currently using smokeless tobacco products



Not including e-cigarettes, these are some of the lowest levels of tobacco product use recorded among Vermont high school students.

In 1993, more than one-third (33.5 percent) of Vermont high schoolers were currently smoking combustible cigarettes. Between 1993 and 2021, smoking use declined by 83.9 percent. In 1999, 14.6 percent of Vermont high school students were currently smoking cigars. Between 1999 and 2021, current use of cigars declined by 79.5 percent.

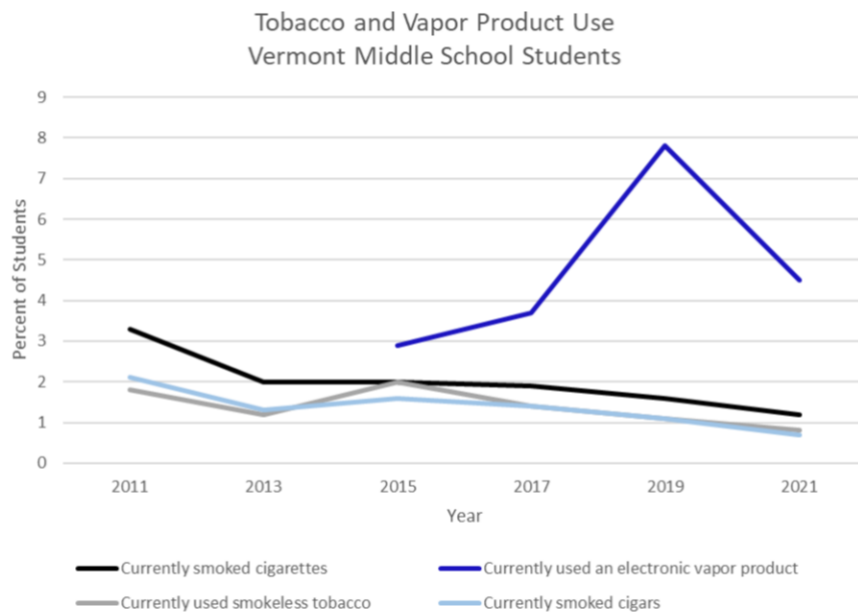
In 2017, 5.2 percent of Vermont high school students reported currently using smokeless tobacco products. Between 2017 and 2021, smokeless tobacco product use declined by 46.2 percent. Youth use of e-cigarettes has gained lawmakers’ focus in recent years, and the Vermont YRBS first inquired about e-cigarette use in 2015, when 30.4 percent of high schoolers had reported ever-trying an e-cigarette and 15.3 percent reported current use.

Youth vaping peaked in the Green Mountain State in 2019 when nearly half (49.8 percent) of Vermont high school students reported having ever used an e-cigarette and more than one-fourth (26.4 percent) reported current use. Between 2019 and 2021, lifetime e-cigarette use among Vermont high schoolers declined by 33.1 percent to 33.3 percent of students. Current use decreased by 39 percent to 16.1 percent of Vermont high school students.

Tobacco and vapor product use is also down among middle school students in the Green Mountain State.²

In 2021, among Vermont middle school students:

- 4.5 percent were currently using e-cigarettes/vapor products
- 1.2 percent were currently smoking cigarettes
- 0.8 percent were currently using smokeless tobacco products
- 0.7 percent were currently using cigars



Not including e-cigarettes, these are some of the lowest levels of tobacco product use recorded among Vermont high school students.

In 2011, 3.3 percent of Vermont middle schoolers were currently smoking combustible cigarettes. Between 2011 and 2021, current smoking use declined by 63.6 percent.

In 2011, 2.1 percent of Vermont middle school students were currently smoking cigars. Between 2011 and 2021, current use of cigars declined by 66.7 percent.

In 2011, 1.8 percent of Vermont middle school students reported currently using smokeless tobacco products. Between 2017 and 2021, smokeless tobacco product use declined by 55.6 percent.

In 2019, 15.5 percent of Vermont middle school students had ever tried an e-cigarette and 7.8 percent were currently using e-cigarettes. Between 2019 and 2021, lifetime e-cigarette use among Vermont middle schoolers declined by 40.6 percent to 9.2 percent of students. Current use decreased by 42.3 percent to 4.5 percent of students.

It should be noted that there are far more adults using cigarettes and e-cigarettes, compared to Vermont high school students.

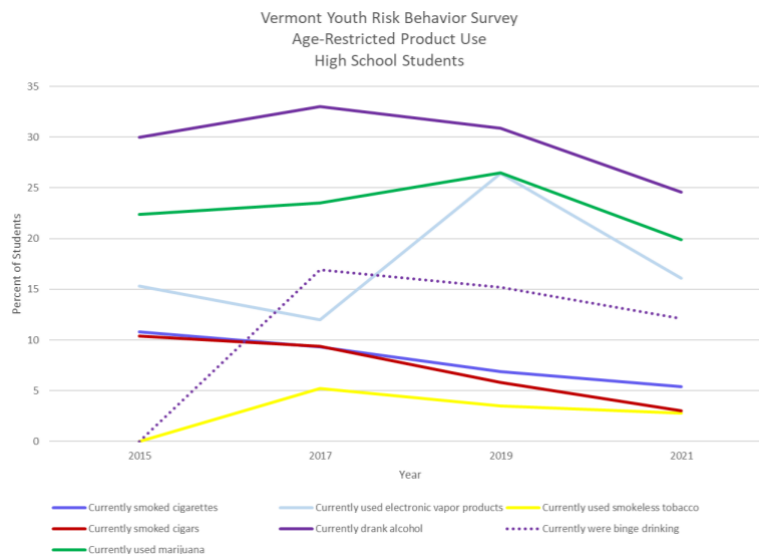
In 2021, approximately 1,331 Vermont high school students were smoking, compared to an estimated 78,232 Vermont adults aged 18 and over who were currently smoking. For every one high schooler student smoking in 2021 in Vermont, more than 58 adults were currently smoking. In 2021, approximately 3,968 Vermont high school students were vaping, compared to 26,430 Vermont adults aged 18 and over who were currently vaping. For every one high schooler vaping in 2021 in Vermont, more than six adults were using e-cigarettes.

Youth Use of Other Age-Restricted Products Is Not Met with Bans

It is interesting lawmakers are pushing forward with prohibitionist policies related to tobacco products, while allowing adult access to other age-restricted products which are more commonly used by youth.

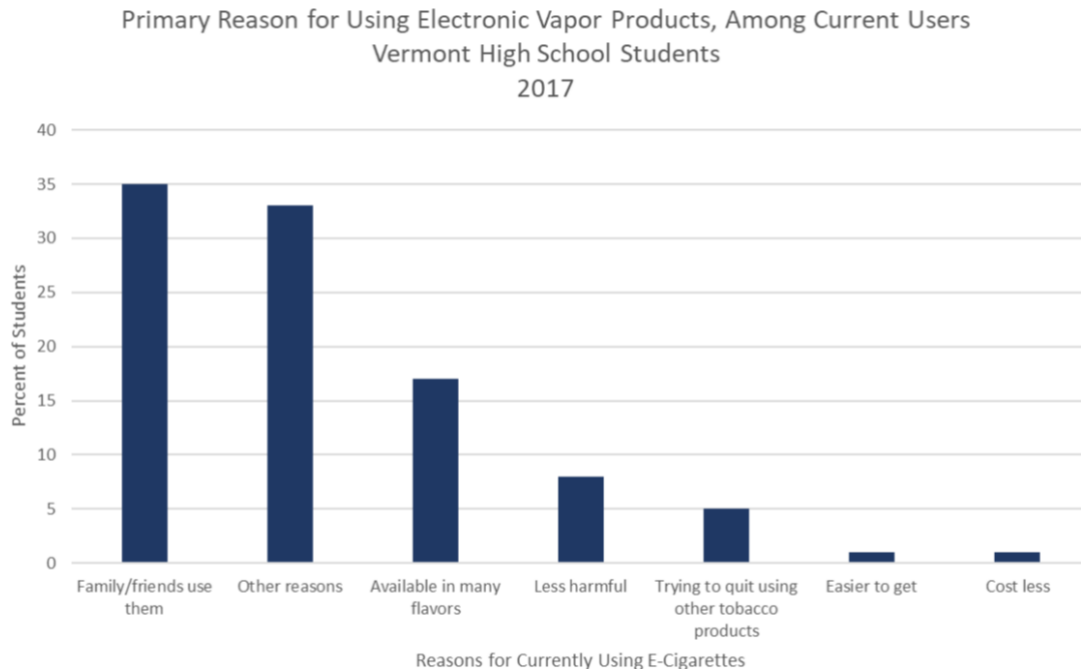
According to the YRBS, in 2021, among Vermont high school students:³

- 24.6 percent were currently drinking alcohol
- 19.9 percent were currently using marijuana
- 16.1 percent were currently using vapor products
- 12.1 percent were currently binge drinking
- 5.4 percent were currently using combustible cigarettes
- Three percent were currently using cigars
- 2.8 percent were currently using smokeless tobacco products



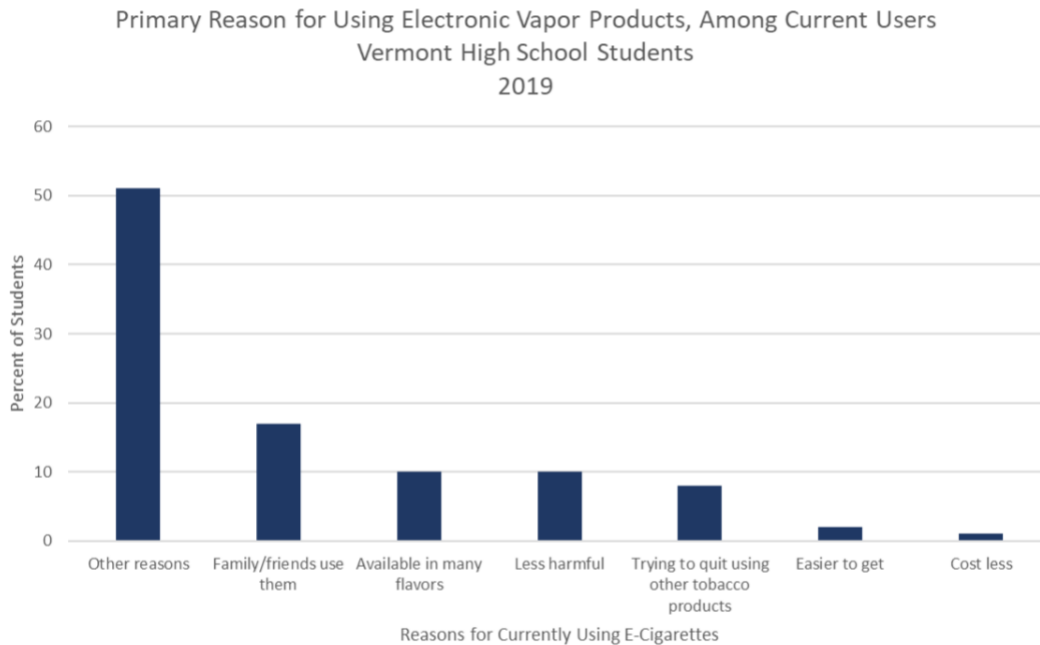
Flavors Are Not Main Driver of Youth E-Cigarette Use

Ultimately, flavor bans fail to take into consideration the reasons why youth are using e-cigarettes. Since 2017, Vermont youth have been consistently citing a plethora of other reasons for using e-cigarettes.



According to the 2017 YRBS, among Vermont high school students who were currently using e-cigarettes:⁴

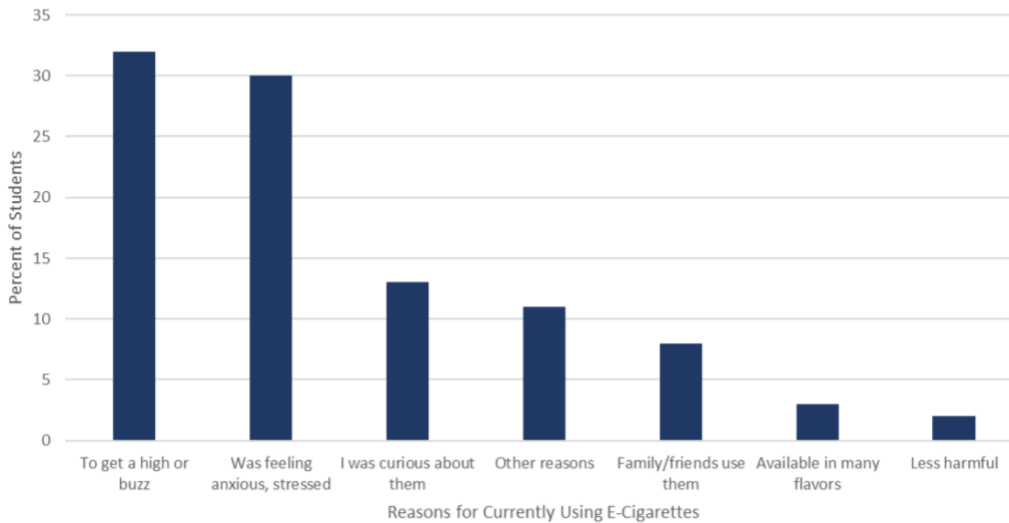
- 35 percent had used them because a friend and/or family member
- 33 percent cited “other”
- 17 percent cited using e-cigarettes because of flavors
- Eight percent had used e-cigarettes because they were less harmful
- Five percent had used them because they were trying to quit other tobacco products
- One percent reported using them because they were easier to get than other tobacco products
- One percent reported using them because they cost less than other tobacco products



According to the 2019 YRBS, among Vermont high school students who were currently using e-cigarettes:⁵

- 51 percent had cited “other”
- 17 percent had used them because of a friend and/or family member
- 10 percent reported using them because they were less harmful than other tobacco products
- 10 percent reported using them because they were available in flavors
- Eight percent reported using them because they were trying to quit other tobacco products
- Two percent reported using them because they were easier to get than other tobacco products
- One percent reported using them because they cost less than other tobacco products

Primary Reason for Using Electronic Vapor Products, Among Current Users
Vermont High School Students
2021



According to the 2021 Vermont YRBS, among Vermont high school students who were currently using e-cigarettes:⁶

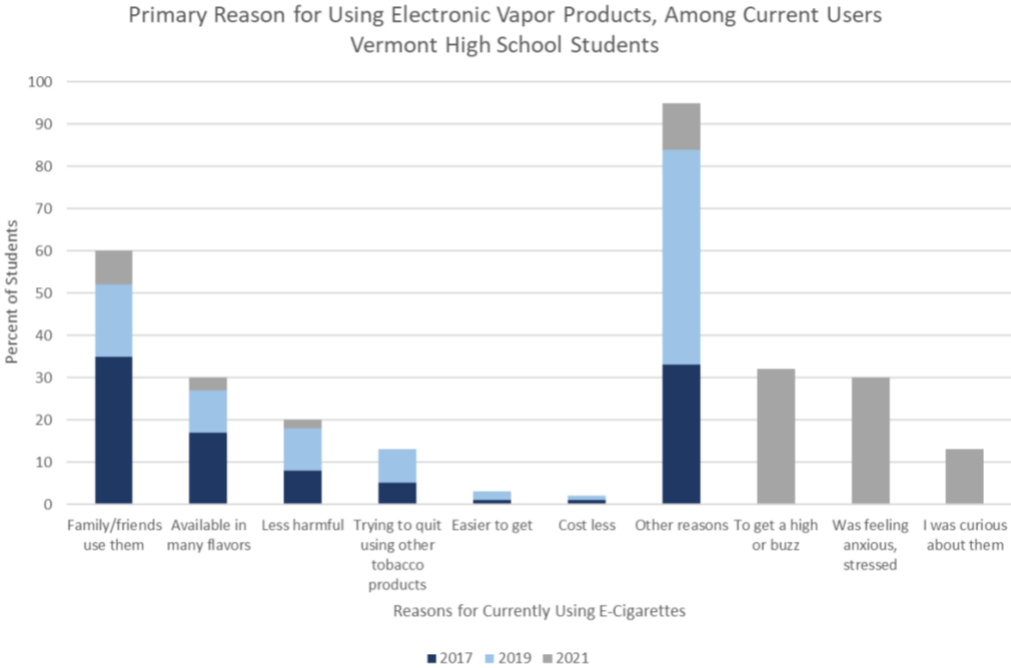
- 32 percent reported using them to get a high or buzz
- 30 percent had used them because they were feeling anxious, stressed, and/or depressed
- 13 percent reported using them because of curiosity
- 11 percent cited “other”
- Eight percent had used them because of a friend and/or family member
- Three percent reported using them because of flavors
- Two percent reported using them because they were less harmful than other tobacco products

This is similar to national data. According to the 2021 NYTS, among U.S. middle and high school students were currently using e-cigarettes in 2021:

- 43.5 percent reported using them to get a high and/or buzz
- 43.2 percent had used them because they were feeling anxious, stressed and/or depressed
- 27.6 percent reported using them because a friend and/or family member had
- 19 percent reported “other”
- 13.2 percent reported using them because of flavors
- 10.3 percent reported using them because they were less harmful than other tobacco products



Lawmakers should refrain from prohibitionist policies which fail to take into consideration the declines in youth tobacco and vapor product use, as well as the reason why youth are using e-cigarettes. In 2021, among Vermont high school students, flavors were the second least-cited reason for use, banning the sale of flavored tobacco and vapor products will not address the real reasons why youth use e-cigarettes.



Adult Tobacco and Vape Use

In 2022, according to the CDC’s Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, an estimated 69,200 adults (or 13 percent) of Vermonters were currently smoking. This is a 12.2 percent decrease from 2021 when 14.8 percent reported current cigarette use. There were 9,032 fewer adults smoking in 2022 compared to 2021.

Smoking rates were highest among 45–64-year-olds, with 16.1 percent reporting current use. Among all adults earning \$25,000 annually or less in 2022, more than one-fourth (25.9 percent) reported currently smoking, compared to only 6.3 percent of adults who earned \$50,000 or more per year.

In Vermont, American Indian/Alaskan Native adults reported smoking at a greater percentage of their identified race at 30.2 percent. This is compared to 20.8 percent of Hispanic adults, 16.8 percent of Multiracial (non-Hispanic) adults, 14.5 percent of Black adults, 12.6 percent of White adults and 8.9 percent of Asian adults.

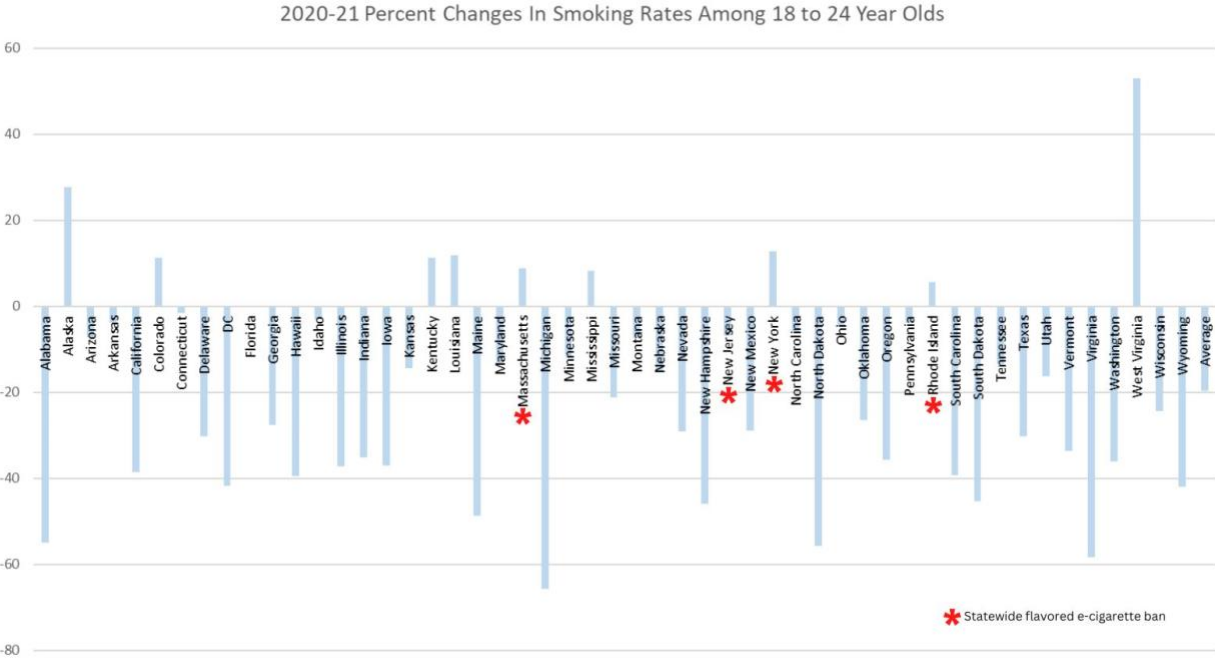


Yet, White adults made up a significantly larger percentage of the Vermont’s total adult smoking population. In 2022, White adults accounted for 73.8 percent of Vermont’s current smoking population, compared to American Indian/Alaskan Native adults, who made up only 1.8 percent. Black adults made up 17 percent, Hispanic adults accounted for 4.1 percent, Multiracial (non-Hispanic adults) made up 2.1 percent, and Asian adults accounted for 1.3 percent of Vermont’s adult smoking population in 2022.

In 2022, an estimated 33,003 Vermont adults (or 6.2 percent) were currently using e-cigarettes. This is a 24 percent increase from 2021 when five percent reported current e-cigarette use. There were an estimated 6,573 additional adults vaping in 2022 compared to 2021. 57 percent of current adult e-cigarette users were 25 years or older in 2022.

Current Flavor Bans Led to Increases in Young Adult Smoking Rates

As of January 2024, five states have active statewide bans on the sale of flavored vapor products, including two states which have also banned the sale of flavored traditional tobacco products. Opponents claim that prohibition will work to reduce smoking and thus liberate resources for states due to reduced health care costs attributed to smoking. Yet, evidence from existing states find flavor bans correlate with increases in young adult smoking, all the while states lose revenue and neighboring states lose profit.⁷



In 2021, 14.4 percent of American adults were currently smoking. This is a 7.1 percent decrease from 2020’s 15.5 percent. Among young adults (aged 18 to 24 years old), a miniscule 7.4 percent were current smokers.

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Among all states (minus Florida), smoking rates among adults aged 18 to 24 years old decreased by 19.7 percent on average between 2020 and 2021. Only nine states saw young adult smoking rates increase during the same period. Alarmingly, three of those states are home to flavored e-cigarette bans. Lawmakers should avoid pushing prohibitionist flavor policies forward.

In Massachusetts, 7.4 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds were current smokers in 2021. This is an 8.8 percent increase from 2020's 6.8 percent. In New York, young adult smoking rates increased by 12.7 percent from 5.5 percent in 2020 to 6.2 percent in 2021. In Rhode Island, between 2020 and 2021, smoking rates among young adults aged 18 to 24 years old increased by 5.7 percent.

Of the then-four states with active flavored e-cigarette bans, only New Jersey saw a reduction (6.8 percent) in young adult smoking rates. This is significantly lower than the average rate of reduction among all U.S. young adults.

Flavored tobacco bans have also failed to meaningfully reduce smoking rates while significantly reducing cigarette tax revenue and transferring it to other states.

The Massachusetts flavored tobacco and vape ban went into effect in 2020. Between 2020 and 2021 state excise tax revenue decreased by 22.3 percent, representing a loss of over \$106 million. Meanwhile, smoking rates among all adults only decreased by 4.5 percent (11.1 percent of adults in 2020 to 10.6 percent in 2021).

Neighboring New Hampshire saw an 11.5 percent reduction in adult smoking rates between 2020 and 2021, yet cigarette excise tax revenues increased by 14.4 percent during the same period. Given the poor effects of flavored tobacco bans on young adult smoking and the failed experiment in Massachusetts, lawmakers should refrain from restricting the sales of flavored tobacco and vapor products.

In Thriving Illicit Market, Unregulated Products Harm Users

Flavored tobacco and vape product bans only punish responsible retailers while incentivizing clandestine actors to engage in new illicit marketplaces. Unregulated tobacco and vapor products pose a risk to all consumers, both youth and adults alike. Nonetheless, consumers have indicated they would seek out illicit products should their product of choice be banned. There are already rogue sellers using online marketplaces to sell these unregulated products.



One study examining a possible menthol ban found that at least 25 percent would “find a way to buy a menthol brand.”⁸ An experiment examined current e-cigarette users under a hypothetical flavor ban found that banning “vaping products from the marketplace may shift preference towards purchasing vaping products in the illegal marketplace.”⁹ An international survey of vapers from Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, found that over one-fourth (28.3 percent) “would find a way to get their banned flavor(s).”¹⁰

TAXPAYERS PROTECTION ALLIANCE

There is already a booming marketplace online. Examples are relatively easy to find. A Craigslist ad in New York City offers for sale a variety of flavored e-liquid products, from peach to cotton candy.¹¹ The seller informs the potential customer to “[i]nteract with [them] the same way [one] would a sales person.” Alarmingly, this seller is not interested in providing potential customers with information regarding the products that they may be consuming, noting that any questions about their “cost, date purchased, where purchased, why selling is no one’s concern.” In California, which recently enacted a ban on flavored tobacco and vapor products, “menthol man” is offering to deliver menthol cigarettes for \$15 a pack.¹²

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Atmos No Nicotine E-liquid 12ml - \$5 (Chelsea)



condition: new
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Made in USA. Multiple flavors. Peach, Island Rum, Orange Mint, Cotton Candy, Cherry, Blueberry, Watermelon, Menthol, Apple, Pina Colada, Grape, Mocha Latte, Candy Cane, Blueberry Frost, Maple, Mango, 2 Lean.
\$10 Each or the complete lot of 18 for \$150

Sold as is with no expressed or implied warranty & all sales final!
PRICE IS FIRM & NON NEGOTIABLE. SERIOUS BUYERS only, NO SPECULATORS.
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Interact with me the same way you would a sales person @ Macy's, Bloomindeals, Target, Kmart, or a street vendor. Personal Questions of my cost, date purchased, where purchased, why selling is no one's concern. If you see the advertisement, it is still available. Don't waste my time inquiring if it is still available!

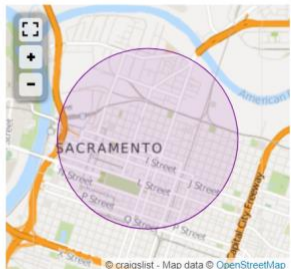
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I have all sorts of marbrol menthol, 15 a pack will deliver for purchases over 10 packs will trade for items of value also have puff bars disposable vapes.

- do NOT contact me with unsolicited services or offers



delivery available

There is an even larger international market of counterfeit vapor products, with officials in numerous countries attempting to stem their flow.

In January 2021, the FDA worked with other federal agencies and seized 42 shipments of counterfeit disposable vapor products from China.¹³ In March 2021, Customs and Border Protection officers in Chicago seized \$1.5 million in counterfeit vapes.¹⁴

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In 2022, officials in Australia, China, Singapore, and the United Kingdom have all reported massive seizures of counterfeit vapor products.^{15 16 17 18} The illicit products are so prevalent that a vapor product company has been actively working with government officials in China and has successfully shut down more than 20 factories manufacturing counterfeit vapes.¹⁹

Flavor Bans Wont Address Growing Mental Health Crisis Among Youth

While lawmakers have turned their attention towards youth vaping, they have seemingly ignored a growing mental health crisis among Vermont and American youth.

For example, according to the *2022 Kids Count Data Book* from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the percentage of Vermont youth aged three to 17 years old that had ever been diagnosed with anxiety or depression by a medical professional increased by 40 percent, from 13.7 percent of Vermont youth in 2016 to 19.2 percent in 2020.²⁰

Youth mental health and suicidal tendencies are also rising.

In 2021, among Vermont middle school students:

- 17.7 percent had “ever seriously thought about killing themselves”
- 13.2 percent had “ever made a plan about how they would kill themselves”
- 6.2 percent reported having ever “tried to kill themselves”
-

While the percentage of middle school students reporting suicidal thoughts decreased by 2.7 percent between 2019 and 2021, the percentage of Vermont middle schoolers who had made a suicide plan increased by 10 percent and the percentage of attempted suicides remained unchanged. Nonetheless, among all categories, these are some of the highest rates recorded.

In 2021, among Vermont high school students:

- 29.6 percent reported persistent feelings of sadness and/or hopelessness
- 13.8 percent had “made a plan about how they would attempt suicide” in the 12 months prior
- 6.9 percent had “actually attempted suicide” in the 12 months prior
-

The percentage of youth reporting persistent feelings of sadness and/or hopeless decreased by 4.2 percent between 2019 and 2021. Conversely, the percentage of high school students contemplating suicide increased by three percent during the same period, while suicide attempts increased by 6.2 percent.

Given that the most cited reasons for using e-cigarettes is to self-medicate either though obtaining a buzz and/or mitigating feelings of anxiety, depression and/or stress, banning flavors

in tobacco and vapor products will not address the rising mental health crisis facing Vermont youth.

Youth Already Facing Epidemic of Fake Pills As Overdose Deaths Continue to Climb

Between January and September 2023, approximately 9.9 percent of every 100,000 Vermonters aged 30 years or younger passed away from an opioid overdose. This is only a two percent decrease from 2022, when 10.1 percent of Vermonters aged 30 years or younger had passed away due to an opioid overdose.²¹

In November 2023, the *VT Digger*, analyzed a recent report from the Vermont Department of Health that found that in 2022, 425 Vermonters aged 24 years or younger had visited a hospital emergency room to be treated for an unintentional drug overdose.²² This was a 526 percent increase from 2019 when 64 Vermonters aged 24 years or younger had visited the ER for treatment related to an unintentional drug overdose.

Across the nation, youth overdose deaths are increasing. According to the CDC, drug overdose deaths among youth aged 14 to 18 years old increased by 94 percent between 2019 and 2021, and additional 20 percent between 2020 and 2021.²³

Between July 2019 and December 2021, 2,231 Americans aged 10 to 19 years old died from an overdose, with 91 percent being opioid overdoses.²⁴ Fentanyl accounted for 84 percent of opioid-related deaths among young Americans. Many of these products were counterfeit, be it pills disguised to look as real FDA-approved ones, or other drugs being tainted with fentanyl.

Consistent with reasons youth are using e-cigarettes, youths are seeking out common prescription drugs, unknowingly being exposed to illicit fentanyl in fake, unregulated pills. Fake and counterfeit vapor products not only pose a risk to youth, but to adults as well. While the instances of fentanyl-vapes have been few and far between, pushing all products into an underground market could create more issues.

Currently, fentanyl vapes seem to be user-created. In 2019, the Drug Enforcement Agency seized a fentanyl vape pen, as well as other narcotics, after a suspected overdose death in San Diego.²⁵ In February 2022, the Rocky Mountain Poison Center issued a warning to Coloradan parents about an increase in calls to the poison center about “young people, adolescents, who [had] been experimenting with vaping fentanyl.”²⁶ According to Dr. Christopher Hoyte, the center has started “noticing that young people are getting fentanyl in liquid form and putting the cartridges in vaping pens and vaping fentanyl.”

Banning flavored tobacco and vapor products will only lead to more instances of counterfeit products and could subject users to far worse chemicals and nicotine. Rather than limiting their sale, Vermont should establish a robust regulatory scheme, not prohibition, as the FDA continues to delay action on authorizing flavored e-cigarettes and tobacco product standards.

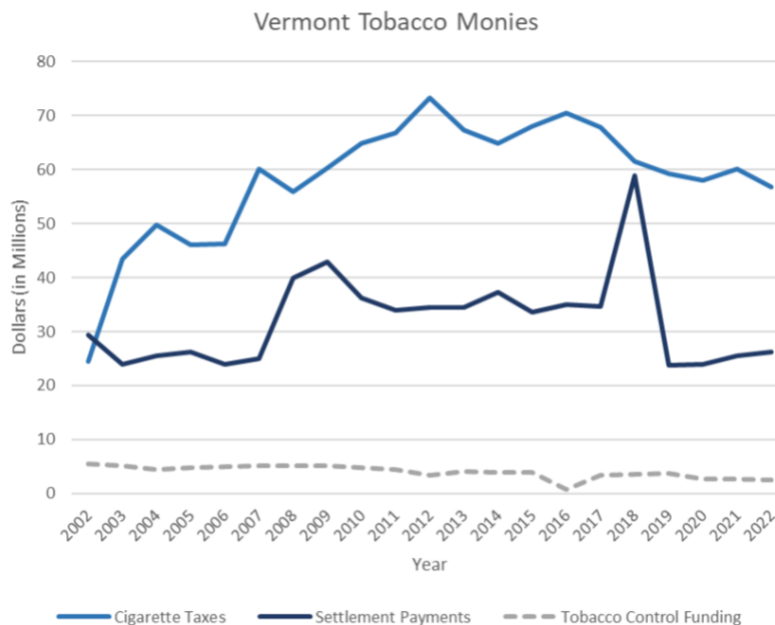
Vermont Woefully Underfunds Tobacco Control

If lawmakers truly want to address youth use of tobacco products and help adults quit smoking deadly combustible cigarettes, they ought to spend more funding on tobacco control programs. In 2021, the Green Mountain State collected nearly \$60.1 million in state excise tax revenue from combustible cigarettes.²⁷ This was a 3.6 percent increase from 2020's \$58 million. Between 2000 and 2021, Vermont collected more than \$1.2 billion in cigarette taxes.

In 2022, the Green Mountain State collected \$56.8 million in state excise tax revenue from combustible cigarettes. This was a 5.5 percent decrease from 2021's \$60.1 million, or \$3.3 million less. Between 2002 and 2022, Vermont collected more than \$1.2 billion in cigarette taxes.

Since 2000, Vermont has collected annual payments from tobacco manufacturers based on the percentage of cigarettes and tobacco products sold in the state in that year. Vermont collected \$26.2 million in settlement payments in 2022, a 2.7 percent increase from 2021's \$25.5 million, or an additional \$700,000. Since 2002, the Green Mountain State collected more than \$674 million in tobacco settlement payments.

While Vermont collected more than \$83 million in tobacco-related monies in 2022, the state allocated only \$2.5 million in state funding towards tobacco control programs, including cessation, education, and youth prevention efforts, which was a 7.4 percent decrease in funding from 2021's \$2.5 million. This amounts to 4.4 percent of taxes and 9.5 percent of settlement payments. In 2022, for every \$1 the state received in tobacco monies, it spent only \$0.03 on tobacco control efforts.



- ¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Youth Risk Behavior Survey,” High School Students, 2021. Accessed January, 2024. <https://nccd.cdc.gov/Youthonline/App/Results.aspx?LID=VT>.
- ² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Youth Risk Behavior Survey,” Middle School Students, 2021. Accessed January, 2024. <https://nccd.cdc.gov/Youthonline/App/Results.aspx?LID=VT>.
- ³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *supra* note 1.
- ⁴ Vermont Department of Health, “2017 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey Statewide Report,” 2017, https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/HSVR_YRBS_Statewide_2017.pdf.
- ⁵ Vermont Department of Health, “2019 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey Statewide Report,” 2019, https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/CHS_YRBS_statewide_report.pdf.
- ⁶ Vermont Department of Health, “2021 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey Statewide Report,” 2021, <https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/document/hsi-yrbs-2021-full-report.pdf>.
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