

# Statement on E-Cigarettes 12/23/15 by Attorney General Tom Miller (D-Iowa)

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Miller: “The harm of the combustible cigarette is dramatically greater than the harm of the e-cigarette”<sup>1</sup>

## Key Points From Miller’s Statement:

- “A panel of experts estimates that the e-cigarette is 95% less harmful.<sup>2</sup> Another estimate is 90-98% less harmful. But whatever number is correct, e-cigarettes are dramatically less harmful than combustible cigarettes.”
- The view that they are equally harmful is incorrect and may be deterring smokers from switching to e-cigarettes.
- There is a misconception about the prevalence of teen e-cigarette use:
  - “According to the National Youth Tobacco Survey, 13% of American high school students used an e-cigarette once or more in the last 30 days.<sup>3</sup> This 13% includes regular and experimental use. The 13% figure has been repeated and used without qualification. People, therefore, assume that 13% of American High school students are regular users of e-cigarettes. **Regular use – defined as 20 or more times in the last 30 days – is actually 2%.**” [emphasis added]

## About Attorney General Tom Miller<sup>4</sup>

- Longest serving attorney general in US: 1978 – present (except 1991-1994)
- Leader in in the multi-billion dollar Master Settlement Agreement signed in 1998 between attorneys general of 46 states and the tobacco industry
- Chairman of the Board of the Truth Initiative (formerly known as American Legacy Foundation), the nation’s largest non-profit public health organization dedicated to making smoking a thing of the past
- Past President of the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/statement-by-attorney-general-tom-miller-on-electronic-cigarettes/>


<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/e-cigarettes-around-95-less-harmful-than-tobacco-estimates-landmark-review>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2015/p0416-e-cigarette-use.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/about-us/about-attorney-general-tom-miller>

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December 23, 2015

## Statement by Attorney General Tom Miller on Electronic Cigarettes

### Miller: “The harm of the combustible cigarette is dramatically greater than the harm of the e-cigarette”




“The harm of the combustible cigarette is dramatically greater than the harm of the e-cigarette. The combustible cigarette is by far the most harmful consumer product known to mankind, [killing 480,000 people each year in the United States alone](#). This is largely due to the many deadly toxins created and released by the combustion. [A panel of experts estimates that the e-cigarette is 95 percent less harmful](#). Some push back on this study, in part questioning the ability to put an exact number on it. Another estimate is 90-98 percent less harmful. But whatever number is correct, e-cigarettes are dramatically less harmful than combustible cigarettes.

“There has been an effort to say that combustible cigarettes and e-cigarettes are equally harmful, that their companies are equally evil, and that they should be strongly regulated the same way. This view is incorrect, but it has gotten significant traction. [Polling indicates that 32 percent of Americans believe that combustible cigarettes and e-cigarettes are equally harmful](#). This means that as many as 13 million adult smokers believe them to be equally harmful, and are very unlikely to switch when switching may save their lives. People making misstatements about e-cigarettes have the best of intentions—to keep kids from being addicted to nicotine through e-cigarettes. But adults misleading kids to get them to do what we want has always been a failed strategy.

“There also is a misconception about the prevalence of teen e-cigarette smoking. According to the [National Youth Tobacco Survey](#), 13 percent of American high school students smoked an e-cigarette once or more in the last 30 days. This includes regular use and experimental use. As the figure is repeated, the number 13 percent is used without that qualification. After a few repetitions, people then tend to assume that 13 percent are regular users. However, regular use—if defined by usage in 20 or more days in the last 30 days—is actually 2 percent. The numbers should be seen together—13 percent used e-cigarettes once or more in the last 30 days; two percent have used an e-cigarette 20 or more days in the last 30 days.”


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## IOWA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL Attorney General Tom Miller

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### About Attorney General Tom Miller



Attorney General Tom Miller is serving in his ninth four-year term as Attorney General of Iowa.

He was born in Dubuque on August 11, 1944, the son of the late Elmer and Betty Miller. Tom Miller grew up in Dubuque, where his father was the longtime county assessor and an inspiration for Tom's early interest in public service. He graduated from Wahlert High School in 1962 and Loras College in 1966, and received his law degree from Harvard Law School in 1969.

After law school, Mr. Miller served as a VISTA volunteer in Baltimore, Maryland, for two years, and then as legislative assistant to U.S. Representative John C. Culver (D-IA). He returned to the Baltimore Legal Aid Bureau as legal education director, and he also taught part-time at the Maryland School of Law.

In 1973, Mr. Miller returned to live in Iowa. He opened a law practice in McGregor in northeast Iowa and served as city attorney of McGregor and Marquette.

Attorney General Miller has served in office since he was first elected in 1978, except for four years (1991-94) when he was in private practice.

Mr. Miller has earned a reputation for integrity, high quality legal work, and strong work on behalf of ordinary Iowans.

Attorney General Miller is well known for his work to prevent crime and assist crime victims, to protect consumers, and to be an advocate for farmers:

- Protecting the public has always been one of Attorney General Miller's top priorities. The Attorney General's office continues its strong record handling many of the state's most important and difficult criminal prosecutions and arguing all of the state's criminal appeals before the Iowa Supreme Court and Iowa Court of Appeals. Mr. Miller and his office also have focused on fighting juvenile crime and working for improvements in the juvenile justice system. The office also provides extensive assistance to victims of crime, including crime victim compensation and support for local programs that aid victims.
- Protecting consumers is also one of Mr. Miller's highest priorities. The Consumer Protection Division in his office has helped hundreds of thousands of Iowans with complaints about wide-ranging topics, including improper debt collection practices, telemarketing fraud and abuse, charity fraud, predatory lending, mortgage, and vehicle complaints. His office's undercover telephone lines have helped reduce telemarketing crimes that cheat older Iowans and people all over the nation. Attorney General Miller has led major multistate investigations and settlements that resulted in millions of dollars in consumer relief to Iowans, and changes to the mortgage servicing industry and subprime lenders.
- Working for farmers has always been a mission for Mr. Miller, who established the nation's first farm division in an attorney general's office when he took office in 1978. The Farm Division has led the way in successful cases against agricultural chemical companies, helped hundreds of farmers get a fair shake from a huge pipeline project cutting across their farmland, led a group of states insisting on compensation to farmers and elevators who suffer losses resulting from StarLink genetically modified corn, and pushed for laws to protect farmers who enter contracts with large agribusinesses.
- Attorney General Miller is known for his longtime fight on behalf of kids and taxpayers with his campaign to reduce the enormous death toll and financial costs of tobacco addiction and disease. He was a leader in the multistate settlement agreement that resulted in the tobacco industry paying billions of dollars to the states and changing the way it conducts business. Now Attorney General Miller is working to reduce youth addiction and the thousands of Iowans who die every year from tobacco-related disease.

Mr. Miller has a long record of achieving results through cooperation with other state attorneys general and with local, state and federal officials, regardless of their political affiliation. He has served as President of the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) and received NAAG's *Wyman Award* as the attorney general who contributed most to NAAG and its members. He has chaired several NAAG committees and led major multistate working groups working on tobacco issues, antitrust enforcement, agriculture, and consumer protection.

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