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Fiscal health before public health? Taxing E-cigarettes, a business decision  
E-cigarette regulation is about replacing cash flow, not harm reduction

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Taxing e-cigarettes has more to do with fiscal health than the health of the public. The motivation of politicians to replace falling cigarette sales taxes is in direct correlation with the popularity of e-cigarettes. According to the Centers for Disease Control, more than nine million people choose to replace their smoking habit by using vaping products in the United States. Government is seeing red, and tax revenue lost each day is mounting. The plan to recoup revenue is an intricate business decision driven by economics, although politicians and organizations claim regulation is about public health. Taxing e-cigarettes: a fiscal decision

Politicians are trying to replace losses of cigarette taxes by defining nicotine (in e-cigarettes) as tobacco. As an example, Minnesota placed a 95% wholesale tax if the product contains nicotine. By simply ignoring science and research, they are justifying their fiscal decision without regard for public health. Other "quit smoking" products containing nicotine will not be defined as tobacco in any legislation to date.

What is being done

Organizations like The Consumer Advocates for Smoke-free Alternatives Association (CASAA) keep consumers aware of pending legislation, and industry groups such as the American Vaping Association (AVA) and Smoke Free Alternatives Trade Association (SFATA) are contesting state-by-state legislation to tax vaping products. "Fiscal" health seems more important to officials than the health of the public. There are now fifty politicians who are opposed to unreasonable measures on e-cigarettes like Representative Tom Cole (R-OK), who has introduced H.R. 2058., a measure that would change the date to exclude vaping products as tobacco in the "Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act of 2009."

If decisions were based on health

According to a survey by Robert Cranfield, MD, e-cigarette users having three or more years of e-cigarette use reported a substantial "96% reduction in health events" and a "resolution of 61.8% of the measured existing health problems" reportedly developed while smoking. The conclusion by Dr. Cranfield was "Electronic cigarettes have a dramatic and positive effect on the health of those who are able to switch from cigarettes." He also stated "health effects were pronounced and very positive." Available nicotine replacement products like the patch have shown "quit rates at 6 months of 6% to 7%," while the potential of e-cigarettes "are 7 to 8 times greater" comparing the effectiveness of e-

cigarette use at or after three years.

The choice to keep e-cigarettes available for consumers who may want to stop smoking should never be about fiscal health, but it is. With upcoming elections, consumers might very well be "single issue" voters at the polls. Vaping products are effective for tobacco harm reduction and take adults away from smoking by choice, by the millions. E-cigarettes are a replacement for tobacco products, not a replacement for lost tobacco taxes.