



December 15, 2019

To: The Honorable Kim Reynolds, Governor
 Members of the Iowa General Assembly

From: George Belitsos, Chairman
 Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control

Re: 2019 Annual Report of the Iowa Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Commission

Pursuant to Iowa Code section 142A.4, I am pleased to submit to you this annual report of the Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control for 2019. The Commission and our community partners take seriously the challenge of reducing the negative impacts of tobacco and nicotine use among Iowans. We appreciate the support of our accomplishments you and other leaders have shown, and look forward to working with you on the important tobacco and nicotine control goals of our commission.

The intent of the legislative charge for Iowa's tobacco use prevention and control initiatives, as outlined in Iowa Code chapter 142A, are summarized below:

1. To establish partnerships among the Executive Branch, General Assembly, communities and the people of Iowa in addressing the prevalence of tobacco use in the state;
2. To work toward reduction in tobacco use by youth and pregnant women, while also engaging youth actively in attainment of these results; and
3. To foster a social and legal climate in which tobacco use becomes undesirable and unacceptable.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in Iowa and the United States. Consider the following statistics and recent trends:

- In 2018, 24.0% of 11th grade Iowa students were current users of tobacco or vaping (e-cigarette) products, compared to 14.7% in 2016 (includes having used cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes and/or water pipes/hookah in the past 30 days).¹
- Among current Iowa 11th grade users of tobacco and/or vaping products, 97.4% report having ever tried e-cigarettes or vaping products.
- E-cigarette use among Iowa 11th grade students has risen from 9.1% in 2016 to 22.4% in 2018.²

¹ Iowa Department of Public Health. Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control. *Iowa Youth Tobacco Use Rates: Iowa Youth Survey—2018, Trends 1999-2018*. Des Moines: Iowa Dept. of Public Health, 2019. <https://idph.iowa.gov/tupac/statistics>.

² 2018 Iowa Youth Survey. Available at http://www.iowayouthsurvey.iowa.gov/images/2018_State/IYS%202018%20State%20Report.pdf



- In Iowa, an estimated 1,800 cancer deaths each year are attributable to smoking.

Accomplishments of the Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control and the IDPH Tobacco Division during 2019 include:

- [Allocation Table for Community Partnerships for FY19](#): all 99 counties have local tobacco control work taking place
- [Map of FY19 Community Partnerships](#)
- [Community Partnership Policy databases](#)
- Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control [2019-2023 Strategic Plan](#)
 - Updated five-year plan places emphasis on nicotine addiction, the health risks of vaping and the increased teen use of electronic smoking devices.
 - The commission recognizes that tobacco mean cigarettes, vapor devices and other tobacco products.
 - Work toward prohibiting Iowa sales of flavored nicotine products that appeal to youth and teens.
- 2019 Commission [Iowa Needs to End Youth Vaping](#)
 - Through 2019, vaping-related respiratory illnesses were reported across Iowa and the nation. This health concern prompted the commission to distribute an editorial in October regarding the growing outbreak of lung injury and proposed state house action steps.
- Completion of a statewide, point-of sale assessment of 3,057 retailers with a tobacco sales permit and [summary infographic reports](#) for all 99 counties from the data. The one-page reports present information about licensed retailers, in Iowa or at the county-level, on the types of tobacco products sold; average prices of five specific products; and placement of product displays, advertisements and promotions.
 - 96% of licensed retailers in Iowa sold cigarettes, 84% sold smokeless tobacco and 71% sold e-cigarettes. The proportion of retailers selling cigarillos, loose tobacco, premium large cigars or hookah tobacco was also assessed.
 - 49% of retailers had price promotions on cigarettes and 41% had an exterior advertisement for cigarettes.
 - 16% of retailers had exterior ads, and 1 in 10 offered a price promotion for e-cigarettes.



In 2020, the Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control recommends state policymakers focus on the following priorities:

- Include e-cigarettes under the Iowa Smokefree Air Act.
- Tax alternative nicotine and vaping products at their cigarette equivalent and increase the cigarette excise tax.
- Raise the purchase age for tobacco and nicotine products to 21. This legislation should also prohibit online sales of vaping products.
- Begin regulating and lowering the concentration of nicotine in e-cigarettes and ban the sale of all flavored nicotine vaping products in Iowa.
- Restore state funding for tobacco and nicotine prevention, education and treatment to a total of \$12 million annually.

The Commission supports the IDPH recommendation that Iowans should not use unauthorized vaping products until more research is conducted on the cause of the lung injury and the IDPH designation of lung injury associated with vaping as a reportable disease in Iowa.

The Commission looks forward to working with your office and the Iowa Statehouse to address tobacco and nicotine control issues, as well as the vaping epidemic.

Sincerely,

George Belitsos, Chairman

Iowa Commission on Tobacco Use Prevention and Control