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**MADIGAN: FDA MUST REGULATE E-CIGARETTES, BAN SALES TO MINORS**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today urged the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ban the sale of e-cigarettes to minors and to regulate ingredients and advertising of the popular and highly addictive products.

In a letter to the FDA, Madigan joined with 39 other attorneys general to call on the agency to take all available measures to regulate e-cigarettes as “tobacco products” under the Tobacco Control Act. E-cigarettes, an increasingly popular product among youth and adults, are battery-operated products that heat liquid nicotine, turning it into a vapor that is inhaled by the user.

Unlike traditional tobacco products, there are no federal age restrictions that would prevent children from obtaining e-cigarettes. Madigan and her counterparts urged the FDA to act to protect teens and children from becoming addicted to nicotine, citing a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention survey that showed the percentages of youth who have tried or currently use e-cigarettes roughly doubled from 2011 to 2012. The survey estimated that in 2012 nearly 1.8 million middle and high school students had tried e-cigarettes.

“It’s widely known that most adult smokers start smoking at an early age, in part because manufacturers and advertisers have historically targeted young consumers with flashy marketing campaigns and deceptive health claims,” Madigan said. “We’re seeing the same tactics at work in the e-cigarette industry. The FDA needs to put a stop to this before more teens take up this dangerous habit.”

The Attorneys General letter stated that e-cigarette manufacturers are using celebrity endorsements, television advertising, cartoons, attractive packaging and cheap prices to encourage youth consumption of these dangerous products. Additionally, some marketing has included claims that these products do not contain the same level of toxins and carcinogens found in traditional cigarettes, cigars and other tobacco products. These claims imply that e-cigarettes are a safe alternative to smoking, when in fact nicotine is highly addictive, the health effects of e-cigarettes have not been adequately studied, and the ingredients are not regulated and may still contain carcinogens. The lack of regulation puts the public at risk because users of e-cigarettes are inhaling unknown chemicals with unknown effects.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, nicotine is highly addictive and has immediate bio-chemical effects on the brain and body at any dosage, and is toxic in high doses. The lack of regulation of e-cigarettes puts youth at risk of developing a lifelong addiction to a potentially dangerous product that could also act as a gateway to using other tobacco products.

Madigan and her counterparts across the country have fought for years to protect people from the dangers of tobacco products. In 1998, the attorneys general of 52 states and territories signed a landmark agreement with the country’s four largest tobacco companies to recover billions of dollars in costs associated with smoking-related illnesses and restrict cigarette advertising to prevent youth smoking.

A copy of the letter to FDA can be found [here](#).

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