

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Supports introduction of Legislation to curb youth E-Cigarette and Tobacco use

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Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin is supporting the introduction of the *Preventing Opportunities for Teen E-Cigarette and Tobacco Addiction (PROTECT) Act* to address the tobacco epidemic harming millions of teens across the country. E-cigarettes and other nicotine-containing tobacco products have been linked to adverse effects on long-term health and harms to adolescent brain development. According to the newly released [2021 National Youth Tobacco Survey](#), more than 2 million youth used e-cigarettes in the past year, with 1 in 4 high school students reporting daily use. Disposable e-cigarettes, inexpensive and designed for single use, were the most commonly used e-cigarette device among young adults, and nearly 85 percent of youth users reported using flavored e-cigarettes.

The *PROTECT Act* would establish a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) initiative that authorizes \$500 million over five years for enhanced research and education about the harmful effects of tobacco products. The bill would also identify effective messaging aimed at teens and young adults, and allocate funds via grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts to state, local, tribal, and national organizations for preventing and reducing youth e-cigarette use.

“The rise of teen vaping is a public health crisis that demands action. We must do more educate teens and their families about the dangers of vaping and enhance efforts to keep harmful tobacco products out of our kids’ hands,” **said Senator Baldwin**. “This legislation is an important step forward to fund enhanced research and education about the harmful effects of tobacco products. This is about intervention, prevention, and protecting the health of our children.”

The *PROTECT Act* is endorsed by a wide range of advocacy groups, including the American Lung Association, American Heart Association, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Academy of Pediatrics, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Parents Against Vaping (PAVe), and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

“Over the past five years, we have seen an alarming rise in youth vaping. In fact, almost 20% of high school students use e-cigarettes, according to the 2020 [National Youth Tobacco Survey](#). Steps must be taken by parents, educators and especially policymakers to end the youth e-cigarette epidemic,” **said President and CEO of the American Lung Association, Harold Wimmer.** “The introduction of the *PROTECT Act* will give us the tools we need to help kids quit and prevent another generation of Americans from becoming addicted to tobacco.”

“Pediatricians across the country have witnessed the harmful health impacts of e-cigarette use in their patients. Young people are using e-cigarettes at alarming rates, leading to dangerous short- and long-term health consequences, including nicotine addiction. The *PROTECT Act* will help confront the issue of youth e-cigarette use through increased public health research and support for evidence-based policies to keep young people safe,” **said AAP President, Lee Savio Beers.**

“The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids strongly supports the *Preventing Opportunities for Teen E-Cigarette and Tobacco Addiction (PROTECT) Act*,” **said President of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Matthew L. Myers.** “The CDC has a critical role to play in addressing the youth e-cigarette epidemic, and this legislation recognizes it needs additional resources given the severity of this public health crisis.”

“The *PROTECT Act* would fund what the tobacco industry has spent years working to prevent: independent, rigorous scientific research on e-cigarette use and effective interventions that health providers and schools can use with youth and young adults addicted to e-cigarettes,” **said CEO of the American Heart Association, Nancy Brown.**

“NASSP is proud to endorse the *PROTECT Act*, which would develop guidance for schools on intervening with and treating youth and young adults who use electronic cigarettes or other tobacco products,” **said NASSP President, Gregg Wieczorek.** “This is a huge step forward in addressing the tobacco and nicotine issues that continue to impact our students and schools. Reducing teen e-cigarette and tobacco

use and addiction rates is a key priority of educators across this country, and we thank members of Congress for their work on this legislation.”

The bicameral bill was introduced by Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and U.S. Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), and is also cosponsored by U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Jack Reed (D-RI), and Edward J. Markey (D-MA).

“This bill will help prevent yet another generation from getting hooked on tobacco,” **said Senator Blumenthal.** “The scourge of e-cigarette and tobacco use among teens and young adults poses a real, dangerous threat to their long-term health and development. JUUL, Puff Bar, and other e-cigarette manufacturers have taken a page right out of Big Tobacco’s playbook, using deceptive marketing tactics and preying on impressionable youth by promoting extravagant flavors and products. By improving research, education, and outreach, the PROTECT Act would equip the CDC as well as states and localities with the funds and tools necessary to protect young people from the e-cigarette industry’s manipulative practices.”

“The profit-driven, predatory assault to hook America’s young people on e-cigarettes and tobacco products demands an aggressive counterattack, and this bill would arm parents, healthcare providers, schools, and policy makers with the vital tools we need to defeat the perils young people face with this ongoing epidemic,” **said Rep. Wasserman Schultz.** “Through research, guidance, and messaging this legislation would develop promising strategies to aggressively address the dangers caused by e-cigarettes. At all costs, we need to ensure our young people do not become addicted to these harmful products. I am eager to collaborate with Senator Blumenthal on this important legislation that takes a bold step toward addressing this urgent public health issue.”

The text of the Senate version of the bill is [available here](#). The House introduced a similar version of the legislation.

An online version of this release is available [here](#).