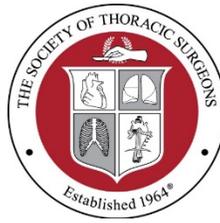


STS Headquarters

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Washington Office

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Washington, DC 20001-6702
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November 19, 2019

Sent via email

The Honorable Eliot Engel
2426 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Haley Stevens
502 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chris Stewart
2242 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R.4019, Smoke-Free School Act of 2019

Dear Congressman Engel, Congresswoman Stevens, and Congressman Stewart,

On behalf of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), I would like to thank you for introducing H.R.4019, the Smoke-Free Schools Act of 2019. This bill would ban e-cigarette use in educational and child care facilities that receive federal funding. This bill ensures that e-cigarettes and other electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) are included in existing bans on smoking in the aforementioned facilities.

Founded in 1964, The Society of Thoracic Surgeons is a not-for-profit organization representing more than 7,300 surgeons, researchers, and allied health care professionals worldwide who are dedicated to ensuring the best possible outcomes for surgeries of the heart, lungs, and esophagus, as well as other surgical procedures within the chest. The mission of the Society is to enhance the ability of cardiothoracic surgeons to provide the highest quality patient care through education, research, and advocacy.

We support efforts designed specifically to protect the nation's youth from tobacco use. Nearly 90 percent of adult smokers begin smoking at or before age 18.ⁱ Studies show that using these products at a young age has a direct association with tobacco use in adulthood.ⁱⁱ STS supports a ban of all non-tobacco-flavored e-cigarettes, including mint and menthol flavors.

Tobacco companies have effectively targeted and addicted kids with enticing flavors, which is why youth use of e-cigarettes spiked in 2018, increasing by 78 percent among high school students and 48 percent among middle school students in just one year.ⁱⁱⁱ This bill would ensure that e-cigarettes and other ENDS are included in existing bans on tobacco products in

educational and child care facilities, thereby helping to keep these products out of the hands of the youth.

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, killing over 480,000 Americans annually and costing the government billions. We applaud your efforts to keep these harmful products away from children.

Thank you for your leadership to curb the youth vaping epidemic. Please contact Courtney Yohe Savage, STS Director of Government Relations, at cyohe@sts.org or 202-787-1230 should you need additional information or clarification. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert S.D. Higgins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert S.D. Higgins, MD
President

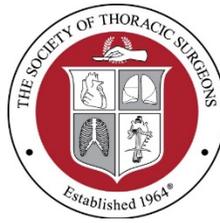
ⁱ <http://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR36361.v1>.

ⁱⁱ <https://www.sts.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019%20Advocacy%20Priorities.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.sts.org/sites/default/files/content/On%20the%20Record/Letter_of_Support_for_the_Reversing_the_Youth_Tobacco_Epidemic_Act_of_2019.pdf

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November 19, 2019

Sent via email

The Honorable Mitt Romney
124 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: S.1832, Smoke-Free School Act of 2019

Dear Senator Romney and Senator Udall,

On behalf of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), I would like to thank you for introducing S.1832, the Smoke-Free Schools Act of 2019. This bill would ban e-cigarette use in educational and child care facilities that receive federal funding. This bill ensures that e-cigarettes and other electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) are included in existing bans on smoking in the aforementioned facilities.

Founded in 1964, The Society of Thoracic Surgeons is a not-for-profit organization representing more than 7,300 surgeons, researchers, and allied health care professionals worldwide who are dedicated to ensuring the best possible outcomes for surgeries of the heart, lungs, and esophagus, as well as other surgical procedures within the chest. The mission of the Society is to enhance the ability of cardiothoracic surgeons to provide the highest quality patient care through education, research, and advocacy.

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Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, killing over 480,000 Americans annually and costing the government billions. We applaud your efforts to keep these harmful products away from children.

Thank you for your leadership to curb the youth vaping epidemic. Please contact Courtney Yohe Savage, STS Director of Government Relations, at cyohe@sts.org or 202-787-1230 should you need additional information or clarification. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert S.D. Higgins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "H".

Robert S.D. Higgins, MD
President

ⁱ <http://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR36361.v1>.

ⁱⁱ <https://www.sts.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019%20Advocacy%20Priorities.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.sts.org/sites/default/files/content/On%20the%20Record/Letter_of_Support_for_the_Reversing_the_Youth_Tobacco_Epidemic_Act_of_2019.pdf