June 3, 2019

The Honorable Brian Schatz  The Honorable Diana DeGette  
U.S. Senate  U.S. House of Representatives  
722 Hart Senate Office Building  2111 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Schatz and Representative DeGette:

The undersigned organizations, representing cardiovascular clinicians across the United States, write to express our strong support for H.R. 2411/S. 1258, the Tobacco to 21 Act. Thank you for introducing this important legislation to address a crippling public health crisis that is threatening to diminish the many years of progress our country has made in reducing tobacco use.

The cardiovascular care community is committed to reducing youth tobacco usage. As you know, tobacco use has long been associated with cardiovascular disease, and is responsible for nearly one in four deaths.1 A recent study found smoking is associated with a thickening of the heart and lowers the heart’s pumping ability – both of which are associated with heart failure.2 Additionally, the longer individuals without heart disease smoked, combined with the amount of cigarettes consumed, the greater the damage to their hearts’ structure and function. Finally, e-cigarettes, which have been growing in popularity, especially among minors, are as harmful to the heart as smoking combustible cigarettes.3

The Tobacco to 21 Act will help prevent chronic disease and protect public health by restricting youth access to tobacco products. Young adults are most vulnerable to social and environmental influences, as the U.S. Surgeon General report states that 99% of smokers begin using tobacco

1 https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/50th-anniversary/pdfs/fs_smoking_CVD_508.pdf  
2 https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/full/10.1161/CIRCIMAGING.116.004950  
3 https://www.cardiosmart.org/Healthy-Living/Stop-Smoking/Smoking-and-Heart-Disease
by their mid-20s. We wholeheartedly support reducing youth access to tobacco products, and believe the *Tobacco to 21 Act* is in line with this shared goal of all cardiovascular societies.

Our organizations applaud your leadership on this important issue and look forward to helping advance legislation to further reduce youth tobacco use across the country. We stand ready to partner with you and other stakeholders to achieve that goal.

Sincerely,

American College of Cardiology  
American Society of Echocardiography  
American Society of Nuclear Cardiology  
Association of Black Cardiologists  
Heart Failure Society of America  
Heart Rhythm Society  
Society for Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance  
Society for Vascular Medicine  
Society of Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions  
Society of Cardiovascular Computed Tomography  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

Cc:  Senator Todd Young  
     Senator Dick Durbin  
     Senator Mitt Romney  
     Representative Chris Stewart

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