**A picture containing drawing

Description automatically generated**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 12, 2020

CONTACT:

Lauren Sears, Program Specialist

Capital District Tobacco-Free Communities

C: 518-419-0815

[lauren.sears@sphp.com](mailto:lauren.sears@sphp.com)

**Sale of flavored e-cigarettes and all tobacco sales at pharmacies end May 18 in New York State**

*Great step forward for New Yorkers’ health*

**ALBANY, N.Y.** – Both the sale of flavored e-cigarettes and the sale of all tobacco products in pharmacies in New York State ends on May 18, 2020. These are major steps forward in helping New Yorkers live healthier, tobacco-free lives.

The new laws were passed as part of the state’s [fiscal year 2021 budget](https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-signs-fy-2021-budget). New York becomes the second state in the nation to restrict the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies and the fourth state to restrict flavored e-cigarettes.

***“Building healthier, tobacco free communities starts with good public health policies that limit the accessibility, affordability, and appeal of tobacco products. These policies will decrease youth initiation to tobacco use and help smokers quit," said Judy Rightmyer, Director, Capital District Tobacco-Free Communities.***

The evidence is clear that flavored e-cigarettes fueled youth vaping to the alarmingly high rate of 27.4% among New York State high school students in 2018. [[1]](#endnote-1) Research shows that the flavors in e-cigarettes attract kids and the nicotine addicts them.[[2]](#endnote-2)

***"Today's social climate places an emphasis on considering the health and safety of others.  May 18th, 2020 marks the culmination of years of advocacy and hard work by people who saw the value in preserving the health of our youth and our schools.  These laws will help us protect children, our most precious and vulnerable population and preserve schools, our most sacred institutions,"* said Christopher Robilotti, Principal, Colonie Central High School.**

***"New York not only recognized, but acted, to address the lethal impact of the virtually unregulated vaping industry and the flavored tobacco products that get kids started on a lifetime of nicotine addiction,"* said Nathan Graber, MD, MPH, FAAP**.  **"These laws make the pediatricians' job of protecting the health of children easier, as nicotine will no longer be easily accessible or targeted to their tastes."**

Selling tobacco products in pharmacies has long sent a contradictory message to consumers by offering tobacco alongside medicine or products for illnesses either caused by or made worse by smoking. That ends now in New York State. It also reduces the number of stores that sell tobacco products in every community, an effective way of supporting tobacco users who want to quit and reducing youth exposure to tobacco marketing. There is overwhelming evidence that the more young people see tobacco, the more likely they are to start smoking.[[3]](#endnote-3)

***“By ending the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies, the pharmacist can provide optimal medication management in an environment that supports overall health,"* said Thomas P. Lombardi, PharmD, FASHP, Systems Director of Pharmacy Services at St. Peter's Health Partners.**

**Support available for New Yorkers who want to quit**

For help quitting smoking or vaping, including free nicotine replacement therapy for eligible residents, individuals can contact a health care provider, call the New York State Smokers’ Quitline at 1-866-NY-QUITS or visit [www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com). Effective medications and counseling are covered by Medicaid and most insurance programs.

**About Capital District Tobacco-Free Communities**

Capital District Tobacco-Free Communities (CDTFC) is a NYS Bureau of Tobacco Control grant funded program held by St. Peter's Health Partners. CDTFC works to increase support for New York State’s tobacco-free norm through youth action and community engagement. Efforts are evidence-based, policy-driven, and cost-effective approaches that decrease youth tobacco use, motivate adult smokers to quit, and eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke. Visit [www.SmokeFreeCapital.org](http://www.SmokeFreeCapital.org) for more information.

**About the NYS Tobacco Control Program**

The NYS Tobacco Control Program includes a network of statewide grantees who work on Advancing Tobacco-Free Communities, which includes Community Engagement and Reality Check, the Health Systems for a Tobacco-Free New York, the NYS Smokers’ Quitline and Surveillance and Research. Their efforts are leading the way toward a tobacco-free society. For more information, visit TobaccoFreeNYS.org, TobaccoFreeNY.org and NYSmokeFree.Com.

1. NYS Dept. of Health, Bureau of Tobacco Control, StatShot Vol. 12, No. 4/Oct 2019, Trends in Electronic Cigarette Use Among High School Youth NYS-YTS 2014-2018: <https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/reports/statshots/volume12/n4_ecig_trends.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Flavored Tobacco Products Attract Kids: Brief Overview of Key Issues, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Dec. 2019, <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/us-resources/fact-sheet/flavored-tobacco-products-attract-kids-brief-overview-of-key-issues> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. A Report of the Surgeon General: Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults “Executive Summary” 2012, p. 1, 3: <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/preventing-youth-tobacco-use/exec-summary.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)