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Healthy People Build Strong Communities

Testimony of the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments (KALHD) to the

House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

Proponent for HB 2563 • February 13, 2020

Chairman Barker and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to supply written testimony in support of House Bill 2563 which raises the purchase and possession age of tobacco products from 18 years of age to 21 years of age, prohibits cigarette vending machines, and prohibits flavored vaping products. KALHD is a nonprofit association dedicated to strengthening local health departments for the purpose of improving and protecting the health of all Kansans.

HB 2563 continues public health's long-standing efforts to decrease the use of tobacco and vaping products by increasing the restrictions regarding age of use, controlling unsupervised access (as is the case with vending machines), and decreasing the attractiveness of vaping to youth by limiting the flavoring options associated with such products. Public health has long known the risks of cigarette use and other tobacco products and we all have seen the recent headlines associated with health impacts tied to vaping. Addictive drugs such as nicotine are challenging to combat but bills like HB 2563 go a long way to minimizing the cost (both economic and health) to its use. KALHD is a supporter of the Tobacco 21 (which has the goal of raising the age of use from 18 years to 21 years) and thus is deeply supportive of that aspect to HB 2563.

It is for all these reasons that KALHD supports HB 2563 and asks that you recommend it favorably.

Respectfully,

Dennis Kriesel

Executive Director, Kansas Association of Local Health Departments