



EAGLE COUNTY

January 28, 2020

Board of County Commissioners

970-328-8605

970-328-8629(f)

eagleadmin@eaglecounty.us

www.eaglecounty.us

The Honorable Kyle Mullica
State of Colorado House of Representatives
Denver, CO 80203

Representative Colin Larson
State of Colorado House of Representatives
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Jeff Bridges
State of Colorado Senate
Denver, CO 80203

The Honorable Kevin Priola
State of Colorado Senate
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Representative Mullica, Representative Larson, Senator Bridges and Senator Priola:

On behalf of Eagle County, we strongly support HB20-1001: *Concerning Nicotine Product Regulation*. As the elected leadership of Eagle County, we have maximized our county powers to protect our youth from the predatory retail practices of the tobacco and vaping industry. As a county, we have increased the price of tobacco and nicotine products, raised the minimum sale age to 21, and implemented tobacco retailer licensing with local enforcement protocol. Even with these actions, we know our youth have easier access options through internet retailers and within municipalities with weaker regulations where we have no jurisdiction. While we believe local control is the best means of protecting our young residents from access to and use of an array of tobacco and nicotine products, we also recognize that our powers are limited.

Colorado is long overdue for state-wide licensing of tobacco retailers. HB20-1001 strikes the appropriate balance between state and local control, encouraging collaboration to maximize limited enforcement resources, and providing adequate penalties to discourage illegal sales practices. It also removes the penalty for youth, a commendable step that places the responsibility on retailers who are selling these products illegally. Strong licensing was recently demonstrated to have an association with youth being 74% less likely to start using e-cigarettes compared to youth in jurisdictions with weak or no licensing in a study published by the American Academy of Pediatrics (February 2019). In our state where youth vaping rates are double the national average, and in mountain communities such as ours where youth vaping rates are even higher than the state average, we need promising policy solutions to help combat the epidemic.

We urge our state legislators to vote yes for HB20-1001 and enhance the protections for our youth and future generations.

Sincerely,

Board of County Commissioners

Kathy Chandler-Henry
Chair

Matt Scherr
Commissioner

Jeanne McQueeney
Commissioner

CC: Representative Dylan Roberts; Senator Kerry Donovan; Gini Pingnot at Colorado Counties Inc.

500 Broadway, P.O. Box 850, Eagle, Colorado 81631