

Hawaii state legislator views on e-cigarettes and likelihood of legislative action

Deborah Taira Juarez, Jason Seto, Alexander Guimaraes, James Masterson, James Davis, and Todd B. Seto

Abstract

Objective: To examine perspectives on e-cigarette use and regulations in Hawaii through key informant interviews with state legislators.

Background: E-cigarette use is rapidly increasing, with sales in 2013 topping \$1 billion in the United States, but e-cigarettes are still a largely unregulated industry. Although e-cigarettes are thought by most to be a healthier alternative to traditional cigarettes, long-term health effects are not yet known.

Methods: Semistructured key informant interviews were conducted with Hawaii state legislators (n = 15).

Results: We found a lack of consensus among legislators, which suggests that substantial legislative action is unlikely in the upcoming session. However, most legislators believe that some type of incremental legislation will pass, such as enactment of a small tax, limitations on advertising to protect adolescents, or regulations concerning where people can use e-cigarettes.

Conclusion: Legislators eagerly await further research to clarify the overall benefits and harms of e-cigarettes at both the individual and population levels.

J Am Pharm Assoc. 2015;55:511–515
doi: 10.1331/JAPhA.2015.15003

Developed in China in 2004, e-cigarettes convert a mixture of pure nicotine and propylene glycol into an inhaled vapor. Recently, e-cigarette use has greatly expanded, doubling in a year from 3.3% to 6.8%.¹ Since their introduction in the United States in 2007, sales of e-cigarettes have climbed to \$1 billion and are expected to reach \$3 billion by 2015, as several large tobacco manufacturers are launching products.² E-cigarette use in Hawaii exceeds national averages, with use among adolescents estimated to be three times the national average.³ An estimated 13% of smokers in Hawaii have tried e-cigarettes to stop smoking.⁴ Moreover, a new rule went into effect on July 1, 2015, making the University of Hawaii at Manoa smoke-free. Because this ban does not apply to e-cigarettes, use of e-cigarettes may increase considerably among college-aged students.⁵

The appeal of e-cigarettes is largely based on a perception that they are not as harmful as traditional cigarettes and may be used as a smoking cessation tool.^{6,7} Given that smoking traditional cigarettes results in an estimated 480,000 premature deaths per year in the United States, e-cigarettes may have a positive impact on health if they can aid in smoking cessation.

Inhaling nicotine and other small chemically laced particles in the vapor, however, may lead to respiratory and other health problems.^{8,9} If e-cigarettes are being used by people who have never smoked, are not helping smokers to quit, or are even encouraging use of tobacco

Deborah Taira Juarez, ScD, Associate Professor, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, University of Hawaii at Hilo, HI

Jason Seto, Student, Amherst College, Amherst, MA

Alexander Guimaraes, MBA, Student Pharmacist, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, University of Hawaii at Hilo, HI

James Masterson, PharmD, Graduate Student, Office of Public Health Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, HI

James Davis, PhD, Biostatistics and Data Management Core, John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI

Todd B. Seto, MD, Associate Professor, John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii, Honolulu; The Queen's Medical Center, Honolulu, HI

Correspondence: Deborah Taira Juarez, ScD, Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy, 677 Ala Moana Blvd., Ste. 1025, Honolulu, HI 96813; Dtjuarez@Hawaii.edu

Disclosure: The authors declare no relevant conflicts of interest or financial relationships.

Funding: The project was supported by Hawaii Community Foundation's Leahi Fund, grant number 64494. James Davis was partially supported by grant numbers U54MD007584 and G12MD007601 from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, National Institutes of Health.

Received January 6, 2015. Accepted for publication March 9, 2015. Published online in advance of print September 6, 2015.

products, their impact on health would be negative. A recent study estimated that 250,000 never-smoking youth had tried e-cigarettes, and e-cigarette use was associated with an increased intention to smoke cigarettes.¹⁰ These findings are of particular concern because nicotine has been shown to have a negative impact on adolescent brain development.¹¹

Most professional associations, including the American Pharmacists Association and American Medical Association, support regulating nicotine-delivery products.^{12,13} Moreover, the World Health Organization (WHO) called for prohibiting sales of e-cigarettes to children and banning indoor use.¹⁴

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has proposed restrictions on the sale and distribution of e-cigarettes to those younger than 18 years and requires full disclosure of all ingredients on package labels. In the absence of federal regulation, 34 states have laws regulating e-cigarettes that focus primarily on limiting youth access (22 states) or creating smoke-free environments (12 states).^{15,16} Minnesota imposes an excise tax on e-cigarettes.

Along with 40 other states, Hawaii prohibits the sale of e-cigarettes to persons younger than 18 years. In

a recent bill banning flavored tobacco, e-cigarettes were exempted because issues around e-cigarettes were believed to be more complex.¹⁷ The Hawaii County City Council last spring prohibited sales of e-cigarettes to those younger than 21 years and recently passed a bill that would ban e-cigarette use in public places, such as beaches and parks.¹⁸ Through administrative action, Hawaii also prohibits the use of e-cigarettes throughout the state on public buses, at public high schools, in state buildings where traditional cigarettes are banned (offices, lobbies, covered walkways, and 20 feet from entrances and exits), and at Aloha Stadium.¹⁹ Moreover, some pharmacies such as CVS have banned sales.²⁰

Several bills in prior sessions addressed e-cigarette use, including a ban on e-cigarettes as flavored tobacco, restricting use in public places, and applying regulations similar to those for traditional cigarettes. Most of these bills did not make it out of committee.

Objective

The goal of this study was to examine perspectives on e-cigarette use and the likelihood of regulations in Hawaii through key informant interviews with state legislators. Our findings will further an understanding of legislative reasoning, which is a missing piece of the puzzle on this hotly debated topic.

Agenda setting

This study interprets evidence from key informant interviews in the context of agenda-setting frameworks. Kingdon theorized that agenda setting occurs through the interaction of three independent streams: problems, policies, and politics.²¹ Others have suggested that agenda setting is characterized by periods of stability and rapid transformation.²² Often, policy changes may be incremental. When provoked by catalytic events, however, policymakers may enact more comprehensive changes.

Methods

Key Hawaii state legislators from the House and Senate were interviewed (n = 15) to examine their attitudes toward e-cigarettes and the likelihood of their passing legislation in four policy areas: (1) sales, (2) marketing, (3) use, and (4) taxation. Legislators were selected for interviews based on their involvement with prior e-cigarette initiatives and/or their committee assignments, including Commerce and Consumer Protection and Health. Interviews occurred between June and December of 2014, before the January 2015 legislative session.

Seven interviews were face-to-face. Directly after each interview, the note-taker created a written summary highlighting some verbatim phrases or comments that exemplify critical issues legislators had raised. We attempted to reduce potential interviewer bias by having two interviewers at every session review the inter-

Key Points

Background:

- Sales of e-cigarettes in the United States are expected to reach \$3 billion in 2015.
- In 2014, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration proposed regulations that would extend its authority over e-cigarettes, but currently they are largely unregulated.
- State and municipal legislatures across the country have begun implementing legislation regulating and taxing e-cigarettes.

Findings:

- Hawaii state legislator opinions diverged on the need for e-cigarette regulation and the form it should take if needed. Most believed that more evidence is needed to demonstrate health risks before enacting substantial legislation.
- Our findings should be of interest to pharmacists and managed care professionals, as e-cigarette use is rapidly expanding and receiving substantial media coverage.
- Pharmacists need to learn more about the issues surrounding e-cigarettes so they can play a key role in disseminating information to other health care providers, patients, and legislators.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/2543028>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/2543028>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)