

## FDA should look at Juul case

Cook County Commissioner Donna Miller recently proposed [an ordinance](#) that would prohibit the sale of flavored nicotine products in Cook County. Under the proposed ordinance, retailers would no longer be able to sell dessert-, candy-, fruit- and menthol-flavored nicotine products and would face fines for violations.

Flavors are designed to addict children, masking the harsh taste of tobacco and making it easier to entice kids. That's why we banned Big Tobacco from doing so in cigarettes years ago. But with 85% of young e-cigarette users vaping flavored products, we need the same public health approach for e-cigarettes.

Miller's proposal is welcome news given the lack of urgency by the Food and Drug Administration to address the youth vaping epidemic. As a result of this federal agency's inaction in fulfilling its legal mandate to review all e-cigarettes prior to their market entrance, dangerous, kid-friendly e-cigarettes have flooded store shelves and remain available despite lacking FDA authorization.

The Truth Initiative, a public health nonprofit, estimates that in the first year since the FDA missed the September 2021 federal court deadline to review e-cigarette applications, more than 1 million children started using vaping products. Many of those young people go on to develop nicotine addictions, with serious harm to their brain development, lungs and mental health. That is the human cost of the poison being peddled to kids and the FDA's unwillingness to do its job.

Since a federal agency has failed to protect our children from the dangers of e-cigarettes, I'm pleased a Cook County commissioner took matters into her own hands. Her proposal would follow the city of Chicago enacting a similar ordinance. And she isn't the only Illinois leader to do so.

Just last month, Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul [reached a \\$462 million multistate settlement](#) with e-cigarette manufacturer Juul over the company's role in igniting the youth vaping epidemic through its aggressive and misleading promotions targeted at children.

As the FDA continues to review Juul's application for market authorization, Raoul and I sent a letter to the FDA urging the agency to consider the findings from Illinois' historic settlement with Juul.

The FDA should follow the example set by Illinois in protecting public health.

For the sake of our children, it's time to take the youth vaping epidemic seriously.

— *U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill.*

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