

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: First Time E-Cigarettes Authorized by F.D.A to Stay on U.S. Market

According to a recent article in The New York Times, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized an electronic cigarette to be sold in the United States. The agency approved three vaping products marketed by R. J. Reynolds under the brand name Vuse and said their benefits in helping smokers quit outweighed the risks of hooking youths. The specific products granted authorization by the F.D.A. are the Vuse Solo Power Unit, and two tobacco-flavored replacement cartridges, each with around 5 percent nicotine.

The court ruling decision could pave the way for authorization of some other electronic cigarettes, including those of the once-dominant maker Juul, to stay on the market. For more than a year, the manufacturers of e-cigarettes have been in a holding pattern — most of their products on the market but awaiting official authorization — as the F.D.A. has investigated whether they were a benefit or a danger to public health.

Over the past few months, as part of its review, the agency has also ordered thousands of vaping products off the market, including a brand that has surpassed Juul as a favorite among teenagers for its fruity and candy flavors, Puff Bars. On Tuesday, it also rejected 10 other Vuse flavored products but declined to say which ones.

Condemnation of the decision to authorize some products was swift. Spokespeople for the American Lung Association feel this decision throws young people under the bus. The concern is both with the broader logic endorsing these products and with Vuse, which in the government's most recent survey on youth tobacco use was found to be one of the most popular vaping brands with young people and that the vaping industry lied about hooking generations on a deadly product that killed millions is now positioned to control the next iteration of the nicotine market.

E-cigarettes first came on the American market in the early 2000s as devices designed to give smokers the nicotine fix they craved without the carcinogens that come from burning cigarettes. However, with the introduction of Juul's products with fruit and dessert flavors about six years ago, use of e-cigarettes among teenagers began to soar and public health officials worried that a generation of nonsmokers was becoming hooked on nicotine.

Some public health experts believe that allowing some vaping devices to stay on the market as an alternative to smoking might make it easier for the government to impose more stringent regulation on traditional cigarettes, whose carcinogenic fumes can cause cancer and play a role in more than 400,000 deaths in the United States each year.

After resolving the vaping issue, the F.D.A.'s tobacco division will push forward on a plan to reduce the amount of nicotine in combustible cigarettes. In its tobacco control strategy, announced in July 2017, the F.D.A. said it would try to force tobacco companies to lower the nicotine in their products to nonaddictive levels. The cigarette industry opposes the move.

In its announcement, the F.D.A. said that it was aware of the heavy use of Vuse products by youth but that it was approving "tobacco flavors," which are less appealing to teenagers. The agency also said that it was imposing digital, radio and television marketing restrictions, while critics argued that the F.D.A. appeared to leave plenty of room for other marketing that could affect youth.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. Its Coalition is concerned about E-Cigarettes and Vaping and seeks to educate and update the community regarding its negative consequences. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit the Vaping Facts and Myths Page of SAFE's website to learn more about how vaping is detrimental to your health www.safeglencove.org.