



Mark Desetti
House Bill 2563
House Federal & State Affairs Committee
February 13, 2020

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of House Bill 2563.

Smoking has long been associated with negative health risks and so our schools became tobacco free areas long before the nation-wide movement to ban indoor smoking and protect people from the negative consequences of second-hand smoke. Over the past year, we have learned that vaping and the use of electronic cigarettes has resulted in serious illness and even death. Rather than assisting smokers to gradually wean themselves off cigarettes, it would appear to also be resulting in new addictions to nicotine with a new set of serious negative health consequences.

School districts have been fighting the rise in vaping among students. It is much harder to control something that does not leave the odor and smoke traces of traditional tobacco products. We need all the help we can get in the battle to keep our students away from these harmful products.

KNEA has adopted the following policy position and included it as part of our legislative agenda:

KNEA supports all efforts to block access by Kansas children to substances that create serious negative health consequences or lead to addiction including tobacco and vaping products. We support policies that keep schools free of such products and any effort to raise the age for sale, purchase, possession or use of tobacco and vaping products. This does not include FDA-approved medications such as nicotine gum when used, if at all, in accordance with label directions.

We believe that passage of HB 2563 will help us to combat both smoking and vaping. We need to do a better job of keeping these harmful products out of the hands of young people and hopefully maintain a non-smoking habit.

We urge the committee to pass HB 2563.