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Thank you for providing the public this opportunity to share their input.

My name is Austin, I am 31 years old, and have lived in Kansas for most of my life.

I began smoking cigarettes at a young age and continued for seven years.

When I was in high school, I watched my father, a pack a day smoker, lose his life to cancer. I knew I was on the same path and had to stop. By the time I was in college, I was regularly coughing up phlegm, and my throat would swell up when I smoked cigarettes, so I tried to stop.

I tried many methods and like so many others, nothing worked.

After seven years of smoking I discovered a new method I had never heard of called an e-cigarette. Unlike other methods, this one provided the hand to mouth action, did not remove me from the social experience shared among smokers, and gave the sensation of smoking. I was hesitant at first because it looked like cigarettes, there was even a puff of what looks like smoke. After researching the ingredients, I quickly learned not only was it far safer, but even shares an ingredient used by asthma inhalers, so I gave it a try.

I decided that the easiest transition would be to try nicotine and menthol flavors as they would get me closest to the real thing. It didn't work. The only thing these flavors left me with was the desire for a real cigarette.

I spoke with other people that were successful in quitting through vaping and learned my mistake. After visiting the few vape shops that existed in Kansas at the time, I found peaches in cream flavored e-cigarette juice, and have not picked up a cigarette in over 10 years.

I do not smell like an ash tray.

My fingers are not stained yellow.

I do not cough up phlegm anymore.

My throat no longer swells, and I can breathe easily again.

According to the CDC cigarettes account for one in five American deaths. This is more than alcohol, illegal drugs, car accidents, suicides, and murder combined.

Protection of the youth should not be ignored, but prohibition has never worked, but harm reduction does.

I urge you to speak with vape shop owners. They know the e-cigarette industry well and have real solutions to stop the youth from getting their hands on these products, without removing the most successful product for harm reduction this country has ever seen.

Thank you for your consideration,

Austin Chamberlain