

ACTION ON SMOKING & HEALTH
ONTARIO CAMPAIGN FOR ACTION ON TOBACCO
QUEBEC COALITION FOR TOBACCO CONTROL
PHYSICIANS FOR A SMOKE-FREE CANADA

**HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS CHALLENGE JUUL AND RONA AMBROSE TO BAN
FLAVOURS AND REDUCE NICOTINE CONTENT IN ALL OF ITS VAPING PRODUCTS**

News Release

Friday, May 29, 2020

Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton - Nicotine giant Juul and its latest board member—former Canadian Health Minister Rona Ambrose—are being challenged to extend new restrictions on vaping products in Nova Scotia to all of its nicotine devices across Canada. The company [announced](#) in January it would stop selling most of its flavoured products in Canada but no such action has been taken. Meanwhile, [Nova Scotia](#) recently banned all flavours in nicotine vaping products with the exception of “tobacco” and established a new 20 mg/ml limit on nicotine content in the devices.

“Canadian kids deserve strong protection from the predatory marketing strategies of nicotine and tobacco companies” said Michael Perley of the Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco. “If Juul wants to clean up its image as the Pied Piper of youth vaping, we challenge the company to extend the new Nova Scotia rules to all of its Canadian products. Juul should lead by example if it sincerely wants to right the terrible wrongs that sparked the youth vaping epidemic. There are now over 400,000 school-aged youth in Canada who are vaping and this outcome is completely unacceptable” adds Perley.

Juul has been implicated by [Time Magazine](#) and [others](#) as the primary culprit in the youth vaping epidemic. [Juul is under investigation by 39 U.S. states](#) and a growing number of other states, cities and school districts are filing lawsuits against the nicotine giant. The [US Food and Drug Administration is also investigating Juul](#) over allegations of predatory marketing practices that include targeting youth. Despite this dark backdrop, Rona Ambrose recently accepted to a position on Juul’s international board of directors to “help earn the trust of its shareholders.

“In her new role, Rona Ambrose has an opportunity to protect Canadian kids from a lifetime of nicotine addiction and potential tobacco use” said Les Hagen of Action on Smoking & Health. “We challenge the former health minister and her fellow Juul board members to demonstrate their sincerity in wanting to curb youth vaping by extending the Nova Scotia protections to all of Juul’s products nationwide. Juul needs to own up to its contribution to the youth vaping epidemic. The company can take immediate remedial action by removing flavours and reducing nicotine levels to protect children and youth in every province and territory—not just Nova Scotia” adds Hagen.

Juul has led the charge in creating and mass marketing flavoured, high-nicotine, “stealth” vaping products that look like flash drives and are easy to operate and conceal. Millions of Canadian kids are exposed to these dangerous and addictive products and their blatant promotions every day.

“Kids are attracted to vaping products with candy and fruit flavourings and then the hook is set by high-dose nicotine salts that are quickly absorbed in the blood stream and promptly delivered to the brain” said Flory Doucas of the Quebec Coalition for Tobacco Control. “The nicotine in one vaping pod is equivalent to the dose delivered in a pack of cigarettes. Kids don’t stand a chance since nicotine is one of the most addictive substances on the planet. These dubious products have created a brand new generation of nicotine users who are now at much greater risk of tobacco dependence” adds Doucas.

Published evidence confirms that [kids who vape are four times more likely to start smoking](#). Tobacco use kills 38,000 Canadians annually and it is the leading avoidable cause of premature death in Canada. Vaping and smoking share the same fundamental health hazard—nicotine addiction.

As health minister, Rona Ambrose publicly championed a ban on flavoured tobacco products to prevent youth tobacco use. Tobacco giant [Philip Morris is Juul’s largest shareholder](#) and it holds one-third of its corporate shares. Juul’s current Chief Executive Officer was previously a tobacco executive at Philip Morris’ parent company Altria.

“The tobacco industry’s business model rests on the addiction of kids to nicotine, and it has now branched out to vaping devices and liquids” said Cynthia Callard of Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada. “By refusing to pull flavoured vaping products off the Canadian market as it said it would months ago, Juul has demonstrated quite clearly that, like tobacco companies, it cares more about profits than kids or public health. Provincial governments like Nova Scotia’s are forcing them to do what they would have done long ago if it was truly a responsible company. If Juul is unwilling to protect kids from its addictive products then we urge federal health minister Patty Hadju to intervene immediately by banning flavoured vaping products and limiting nicotine content nationwide” adds Callard.

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