Whereas, In the last few decades the United States has achieved remarkable success in reducing the use of tobacco products and the associated negative health consequences; and

Whereas, From a common sense perspective, most would agree that in the case of an individual smoking tobacco vs. e-cigs, the tobacco smoke produces more harmful tars and toxins and individuals have the right to try to switch to e-cigs to reduce inhaling these; and

Whereas, Many physicians believe that because of the addictive - and possible acute inflammatory effects of nicotine on the cardiovascular system - patients be encouraged to try to stop smoking by other means before using e-cigs; and

Whereas, Teens and young adults, up to 21 years of age should avoid all nicotine delivery products because of the risks of addiction and adverse effects on brain development; and

Whereas, The strong divide in the medical and public health communities regarding accessibility of e-cigs, primarily rests on “population” based disagreements and speculations regarding whether they are effective for the complete abstinence from smoking cigarettes, will prove effective over the long term in reducing tobacco use and whether they play a role in addicting youth to nicotine, and possibly tobacco; and

Whereas, Recent debate over the role of inhalation products in further tobacco harm reduction has created confusion within the profession and public, rather than the sage guidance they deserve; and

Whereas, E-cigarettes have been shown to be effective in reducing tobacco use in some adults justifying them as a cessation option, yet, it is also prudent to assure minors are banned from purchasing potentially addictive nicotine substances; and

Whereas, Although abstinence of inhalation of other than prescribed drugs is the healthiest practice, youth continue to experiment with inhalation of substances such as cannabis, corn silk, hookah mixtures and non-drug containing, relatively toxic free, often flavored, “vape” products; therefore be it
RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association advocate for a “protect adult choice and youth’s health” “common sense” tobacco strategy (with a report back to the House of Delegates annually) under which:

- Current educational, promotional and policy initiatives (e.g. taxation) to reduce the use of tobacco products by inhalation and orally would continue, including advocating for the prohibition of the sale of ALL nicotine containing products to individuals under 21 years unless via prescription for medical purposes.

- E-cigarettes (non-tobacco products containing nicotine) would be accessible at an affordable price to adults who wish to use them, and would be available to individuals below 21 years of age only as part of state sanctioned tobacco cessation activities. States and local jurisdictions would be free to require vendors to post warnings regarding the possible health risks of the use of nicotine inhalation products.

- Non-nicotine, non-drug containing vaping and other inhalation products would not be considered tobacco products, but would be monitored by state and local jurisdictions as any other personal use product regarding safety and public accommodation. (New HOD Policy)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

Received: 09/28/18