

National Association of County and City Health Officials Calls for Swift Action to Eliminate Youth Vaping

New NACCHO report highlights work of rural health departments to address tobacco use

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, September 13, 2019 / EINPresswire.com/ -- With youth vaping rates continuing to rise and an outbreak of vaping-related illnesses, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has announced that it will act to remove non-tobacco-flavored e-cigarette products from the market. On behalf of the nation's nearly 3,000 local health departments across the country, the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) strongly supports this action at the federal level and urges the FDA to regulate this robust market, especially in regard to rising vaping levels on youth.

"The data continue to show what local health officials have been seeing on the ground in far too many communities—vaping is reversing our gains in addressing youth tobacco use and not letting up," said Lori Tremmel Freeman, NACCHO Chief Executive Officer. "In fact, a recent NACCHO survey of rural local health departments notes that 93% of respondents see e-cigarettes as a public health threat in their community. However, our research also notes that there are real barriers to ensuring that cessation and prevention activities are available in all communities.

"We urge the administration to work swiftly to adopt this and other measures to address the youth vaping crisis and to support local communities in addressing tobacco use across the board."

NACCHO's recently released report, *Tobacco Control Efforts in Rural America: Perspectives from Local Health Departments*, outlines the landscape of tobacco control programs in these areas, including what types of tobacco programs and policies local health departments engage in, how they are evaluated, key partnerships to address tobacco use, and the barriers to implementing tobacco programs and policies in these areas. Nearly all respondents (90%) reported engaging in tobacco and cessation activities and initiatives in the community, including education, referrals to Quitlines, social marketing campaigns, and cessation support groups. Of particular note, 93% of respondents indicated that e-cigarettes were a threat in their communities and have engaged



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in prevention programs in schools, educational and social media campaigns, used advertisements from national partners like the CDC, FDA and Truth Initiative, and worked to include the use of e-cigarettes in community health assessments and smoke-free air policies. They are also reaching out to students and youth directly to address the problem on the ground. As more communities are affected by the increase in e-cigarette use, local health departments can play a significant part to disseminate educational materials, provide support to schools, ensure local policies support tobacco-free kids, and continue to promote evidence-based approaches to combat use among youth.

While the importance of addressing tobacco use—including the rise of e-cigarette use by youth—is well understood by local health departments, those working in these rural areas face some unique barriers to implementing tobacco programs and policies in their jurisdictions, including limited dedicated funding to tobacco programs (54%), lack of staff expertise (42%), and challenges in overcoming the political landscape of their communities. For more information see:

- NACCHO Policy Statement: [Local Tobacco and Vaping Control Regulations](#)
- NACCHO Policy Statement: [Tobacco Prevention](#)

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About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit www.naccho.org.

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