



**House Committee on Public Health
House Bill 2300 by Rep. Suleman Lalani, MD
Testimony of Maria Monge, MD, Submitted on Behalf of
the Texas Medical Association, Texas Pediatric Society,
and Texas Public Health Coalition
*April 21, 2025***

Honorable Chair VanDeaver, Vice Chair Campos, and committee members:

The Texas Medical Association (TMA) and the Texas Pediatric Society (TPS), representing more than 59,000 physician and medical student members across the state, and the Texas Public Health Coalition, representing more than 30 member organizations, appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony *in support* of House Bill 2300. We support Representative Lalani’s efforts to protect our youth by strengthening laws that prohibit the sale of hookah to individuals under the age of 21.

A hookah is a water pipe that is used to smoke specially made tobacco mixtures that come in various flavors. For traditional hookahs, users inhale smoke through a tube and mouthpiece after charcoal-heated air passes through a tobacco mixture and a water-filled chamber.¹ According to the 2024 National Youth Tobacco Survey, approximately 60,000 U.S. middle school students and 120,000 high school students smoked tobacco in a hookah during just the past 30 days.^{2,3}

Hookah products are available in a wide variety of flavors that appeal to young people, such as bubble gum and blueberry.⁴ Hookah products are also designed to be used in social settings – such as hookah bars and lounges – which contributes to their appeal to youth. The Population Assessment on Tobacco and Health Survey found that nearly 80% of current young hookah users say they use it because they like socializing while using the product.

Like other forms of tobacco, hookah poses health risks and contains many harmful chemicals, including nicotine, tar, and heavy metals. The charcoal that heats hookah tobacco can produce high levels of carbon monoxide and chemicals that cause cancer. Hookah smoke is not filtered as it passes through water and the smoke retains a high level of toxic chemicals that are inhaled. Hookah smoke can be more dangerous than cigarette smoke, as users can be exposed to nine times more carbon monoxide and 1.7 times more nicotine than from a single cigarette.¹ A person who smokes hookah for an hour – the typical amount of time per use – inhales 100-200 times more smoke than a person who smokes a single cigarette.² Hookah smoke may also harm lung function, and increases the risk of lung, bladder, and oral cancers, as well as heart disease.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Our organizations appreciate the author’s and the committee’s efforts to protect our youth from the harmful effects of hookah use by making it a criminal offense for retailers to sell, give, or provide hookah to anyone under the age of 21. For answers to additional questions, please contact Matt Dowling, TMA director of Public Affairs and lobbyist, at matt.dowling@texmed.org; Clayton Travis, TPS director of advocacy and health policy, at clayton.travis@txpeds.org; or Kaavya Venkat, MPH, Texas Public Health Coalition coordinator, at kaavya.venkat@texmed.org.

¹ <https://www.lung.org/quit-smoking/smoking-facts/health-effects/facts-about-hookah>

² https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7341a2.htm?s_cid=mm7341a2_w

³ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7341a2.htm?s_cid=mm7341a2_w

⁴ <https://assets.tobaccofreekids.org/factsheets/0384.pdf>