



## **House Committee on Public Health Senate Bill 1313 by Sen. Molly Cook**

### **Oral Testimony of Valerie Smith, MD, Submitted on Behalf of the Texas Medical Association, Texas Pediatric Society, and Texas Public Health Coalition *May 12, 2025***

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- Hello, I am Dr. Valerie Smith, a pediatrician in Tyler, representing the Texas Medical Association, Texas Pediatric Society, and Texas Public Health Coalition. Thank you for the opportunity to comment in *support* of Senate Bill 1313, prohibiting e-cigarette retailers from using advertising that appeals to youth.
- E-cigarette and tobacco marketing – that uses cartoon characters and candy imagery – appeals to youth and fuels addiction. Research links these marketing practices to increased e-cigarette use and perceived social benefits among teens. The 2024 National Youth Tobacco Survey reports millions of students are addicted. Immediate action is essential to safeguard our youth.
- E-cigarettes present clear health risks. Most contain nicotine, a highly addictive substance that interferes with adolescent brain development, impairing attention, learning, and impulse control. This disruption can cause long-term changes in brain function, heightening the risk of lifelong addiction and worsening mental health challenges. Additionally, e-cigarette use increases the likelihood of respiratory problems and cardiovascular disease.
- SB 1313 protects youth from the harmful effects of e-cigarettes by prohibiting retailers from using advertisements with cartoon-like fictional characters, celebrity images, and other designs that appeal to children and adolescents.
- We support this bill as a proactive measure to reduce youth e-cigarette use. The health of our Texas youth is non-negotiable.
- Thank you for your time.