



ILLINOIS ACADEMY OF  
FAMILY PHYSICIANS

*Devoted to Advocacy, Education & Action*

**4756 Main St. Lisle, IL 60532**

**630.435.0257 or 800.826.7944 (In Illinois)**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ginnie Flynn, 630-427-8004 Office 630-263-4613 Mobile and [gflynn@iafp.com](mailto:gflynn@iafp.com).

## **Illinois Academy of Family Physicians Calls on City Council to Support Regulation of Kid-Friendly Tobacco Products**

*Mayor Emanuel Proposal Will Help Reduce Number of Youth Smokers*

LISLE, Ill. November 25, 2013 – The Illinois Academy of Family Physicians (IAFP), representing over 4,200 members statewide and over 1,200 in Chicago, called on members of the Chicago City Council to publicly endorse Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s proposed ordinances expanding tobacco control policies targeted at protecting Chicago’s youth.

Mayor Emanuel has wisely taken a multi-strategy approach to the difficult problem of tobacco use. “The proposed ordinances to regulate products that are aimed at hooking new and younger customers, along with higher tobacco taxes will work to deter youth smoking,” said Deborah L. Edberg, MD, IAFP Second Vice President and a family physician at Erie Family Health Center in Humboldt Park. “Together, these ordinances help thousands in Chicago break the nicotine addiction.”

IAFP strongly supports the ordinance tackling menthol and other flavors, restricting sales of flavored cigarettes, including menthol-flavored cigarettes, near schools. Flavored tobacco is known to be a “starter” product for youth who begin smoking. For example, kids aged 12-17 smoke menthols at a higher rate than any other age group.

According to troubling statistic from the National Youth Tobacco Survey, the use of e-cigarettes among middle and high school students doubled from 2011 to 2012. Mayor Emanuel’s proposed ordinance will make it more difficult for youth to access e-cigarettes by placing the same safeguards around these products as traditional cigarettes, such keeping e-cigarettes behind the retail counter and enforcing age restrictions. “E-cigarettes have not been proven to be safe,” said Edberg. “Family physicians are concerned by youths increasingly using a product that looks like a cigarette and is marketed like a cigarette.”

This ordinance will also amend the city’s Clean Indoor Air ordinance to include the use of electronic smoking devices, making Chicago the first major city to attempt to restrict their use in public places.

The impact of the policy proposals can be strengthened by a new awareness campaign launched by the city aimed at reducing use of menthol-flavored cigarettes by youth. Chicago is the first major city to run a large-scale ad campaign aimed squarely at curbing the use of mentholated products.

“We applaud Mayor Emanuel for taking a bold and comprehensive approach to ending the cycle of addiction to harmful tobacco products,” concludes Edberg. “Chicago can be the nation’s leader on this important issue and we hope that our success in enacting these policies will quickly bring down smoking rates and protect our kids from Big Tobacco.”

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*Founded in 1947, the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians represents over 4,200 family physicians, family medicine residents and medical students throughout Illinois, dedicated to improving the health of the people of Illinois through support and education of the family physicians who care for them. Learn more at [www.iafp.com](http://www.iafp.com) and follow us on twitter @IllinoisAFP.*

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[iafp@iafp.com](mailto:iafp@iafp.com)

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