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June 8, 2023

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Governance and Finance
1021 O Street, Suite 7620
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 935 (Connolly) Tobacco sales: flavored tobacco ban - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Caballero,

The Health Officers Association of California (HOAC), which represents the physician health officers of California's sixty-one city and county jurisdictions, supports AB 935 which would make the flavored tobacco ban punishable in the same manner as the Stop Tobacco Access to Kids Enforcement (STAKE) Act.

Health officers protect public health in their communities through disease prevention, emergency preparedness, health education and promotion, regulating environmental hazards, and advocating for programs that promote health equity. It's well established that tobacco use is a leading cause of preventable diseases, including cancer, heart disease, respiratory issues, and other serious health conditions. Enforcement is important to deter non-compliance, prevent circumvention, protect public health, maintain fairness, and strengthen the overall effectiveness of the flavored tobacco ban. Enforcing the ban will help address long-standing health disparities and prevent tobacco-related harm in vulnerable populations. Young people will be better protected from the harmful effects of tobacco use and the changes of them developing a lifelong addiction will be reduced.

HOAC is dedicated to promoting practices that improve the health of all Californians. For these reasons, HOAC supports AB 935 and requests your "aye" vote on this important measure.

Sincerely,

Kat DeBurgh, MPH
Executive Director
Health Officers Association of California