



November 30, 2015

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne
Premier of Ontario

The Honourable Dr. Eric Hoskins, MPP (St. Paul's)
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

The Honourable Dipika Damerla, MPP, Mississauga East – Cooksville
Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

Ms. France Gélinas, MPP (Nickel Belt)

Ms. Martha Greenberg
Assistant Deputy Minister (Interim), Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Jackie Wood, Acting Director, Strategic Initiatives Branch
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Re: Regulatory amendments under the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* and new regulations under the *Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015*

Dear Premier Wynne, Honourable Minister Hoskins, Honourable Minister Damerla, Ms. Gélinas, Ms. Greenberg, and Ms. Wood:

We are writing in response to a letter we received from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, dated November 23, 2015, outlining the new regulations under the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* and the *Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015*.

Regarding regulations under the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act*:

- The Ottawa Council on Smoking or Health (OCSH) is very pleased that the Ontario government is finally banning smoking on hospital campuses. We have written to the Ministry regarding this issue in the past (<http://www.smokefreeottawa.com/whats-new/ocsh-submission-re-new-smoke-free-ontario-act-regulations>). The OCSH has received complaints for many years about second-hand smoke exposure at emergency room and hospital entranceways, and about cigarette butt litter.

- **There is no medical or scientific evidence justifying the one-year delay of the ban on menthol flavouring.** To the contrary, according to a recent media interview with the Canadian Cancer Society: “Menthol is far more popular among youth than among adults...Only about five per cent of Canadian adults smoke menthol, but 29 per cent of youth do.”¹ Delaying the menthol ban will only lead to more youth developing a life-long addiction to tobacco products, an increased burden on the health care system, and an increased financial burden on taxpayers. We urge the Ontario government to immediately ban menthol flavouring to protect Ontario children and youth.

Regarding the *Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015*:

- The OCSH fully supports a ban on the use of electronic cigarettes in all public places and workplaces where smoking is already prohibited.
- **The OCSH strongly objects to medical marijuana vaping inside public places and workplaces. The government must protect Ontarians of all ages who suffer from chronic diseases (e.g. lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, cancer), and whose health and safety would be severely comprised. We urge the province to immediately reverse this regulation.**
- For the same reason stated above, the OCSH urges the government to **immediately reverse the regulation permitting the use of electronic cigarettes in stage productions.** Indoor and outdoor stage productions are public places and workplaces and should be subject to the same level of protection as all other public places and workplaces.

Gaps in Legislation and Regulations:

- The OCSH is very disappointed that the government has not yet banned **water pipe smoking inside all public places and workplaces and in all outdoor public spaces and work places where smoking is prohibited.** Toronto Public Health provided incontrovertible scientific evidence about the harms of second-hand smoke from water pipes² in support of the bylaw for the City of Toronto, which was adopted on November 4, 2015, and which comes into force in April 2016. We urge the Ontario government to extend this level of protection across the province.
- We are also very disappointed that the province still has not addressed involuntary exposure to second-hand smoke in multi-unit dwellings (MUDs). Thousands of Ontarians living in MUDs are severely affected by this issue both day and night. This situation will only worsen as more municipalities adopt infill planning policies and as more MUDs are built in communities across Ontario. Exposure to second-hand smoke in MUDs is the number one complaint that we receive. Mothers with young, asthmatic

children and seniors with debilitating chronic health conditions send us heart-breaking letters. In all cases, landlords and property managers refuse to exercise their legal right to adopt and enforce 100% smoke-free bans. We urge the Ontario government to act on this long-neglected public health issue.

We commend the Ontario government for taking action on a number of outstanding tobacco control issues that have negatively affected the health of Ontarians since the passage of the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* almost 10 years ago. The government can and should do more to protect the public, workers, and residents in MUDS from harmful tobacco and non-tobacco smoking and vaping products.

We strongly urge the Ontario government to **immediately ban all forms of smoking and vaping, both tobacco and non-tobacco, inside all public places, all workplaces, and all MUDs in Ontario, as well as all outdoor public spaces where tobacco smoking is already prohibited.**

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Carol McDonald
President
Ottawa Council on Smoking or Health

cc The Honourable Bob Chiarelli, MPP, Ottawa West—Nepean
Mr. John Fraser, MPP, Ottawa South
Mme Marie France Lalonde, MPP, Ottawa—Orléans
Ms. Lisa MacLeod, MPP, Nepean—Carleton
The Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, MPP, Ottawa—Vanier
The Honourable Yasir Naqvi, MPP, Ottawa Centre
Mr. Patrick Browne, MPP, Simcoe North
Ms. Andrea Horwath, MPP, Hamilton Centre
Mr. Michael Perley, Executive Director, Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco

REFERENCES

¹ Sheryl Ubelacker, The Canadian Press. "Cancer Society fears new cigarettes with squeezable menthol filters will hook kids." November 19, 2015. <http://www.cfra.com/HealthCP/Article.aspx?id=487330>

² Toronto Public Health. "Health Risks of Indoor Water pipe Smoking." March 10, 2014. <http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vnextoid=f04718ea8641c410VgnVCM10000071d60f89R CRD>