



THOLOS FOUNDATION

International THR Newsletter

WELCOME TO THE THOLOS FOUNDATION'S INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO HARM REDUCTION NEWSLETTER!

Welcome back to our monthly newsletter. We have established this bulletin to share the latest developments in Tobacco Harm Reduction efforts across the globe.

The Tholos Foundation promotes effective policy through research, education, and coalition building. This newsletter is a major component of our efforts to **build an international coalition of THR advocates who are ready and willing to fight for the rights of reduced-risk users** and oppose the lawmakers and agencies that work to restrict these rights.

We encourage collaboration with like-minded organizations and activists. Please forward this newsletter to anyone and everyone you know who would be interested in staying up-to-date on international THR developments!

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WHAT IS THE THOLOS FOUNDATION UP TO?



Submitting Official Testimony to Bangladesh's Health Ministry

In Bangladesh, a proposal to ban e-cigarettes, snus, heat-not-burn products, and oral nicotine pouches led us to submit official testimony to the Health Ministry aimed at educating health officials and lawmakers about harm reduction and the science behind reduced-risk nicotine products. Our submission and statement from Tholos can be read [here](#). An excerpt is provided to the right.



"Considering that the smoking rate in Bangladesh is nearly triple America's, we made clear to Bangladeshi officials that millions of Bangladeshi lives depend on access to reduced-risk alternatives. Moving forward with this proposal would be a death sentence for current smokers in the country."

Contested vape bill lapses into law

By CNN Philippines Staff

Published Jul 26, 2022 12:31:39 PM

Updated Jul 26, 2022 8:45:00 PM



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Applauding the Philippines for Legalizing E-Cigarettes

After sending a letter to President Rodrigo Duterte in June regarding legislation that would legalize vaping in the Philippines, Tholos was pleased to release a statement after the "Vape Bill" became law. The full statement can be read [here](#).

Chairing a Harm Reduction Discussion at the 9th Annual Friedman Conference

Tim Andrews, Tholos' Director of Consumer Issues, chaired a panel discussion focused on tobacco harm reduction at the 9th annual Friedman Conference. The event was held in Sydney, Australia and is the biggest pro-liberty conference in the Asia-Pacific region.



Educating Thai Lawmakers on Harm Reduction

Tholos has authored a letter to members of Thailand's National Assembly, articulating the benefits of harm reduction and highlighting crucial evidence regarding a proposal that would legalize and regulate e-cigarettes. In addition, our letter focused on Thailand's draconian enforcement of current e-cigarette laws that has had significantly negative effects on tourism. The letter can be read [here](#).

Responding to FDA's Proposed Rules to Prohibit Menthol Cigarettes and Flavored Cigars

On August 1st, Americans for Tax Reform submitted official testimony to the United States Food and Drug Administration urging reconsideration of the proposals to ban menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars. Our submission detailed the dangers of illicit tobacco smuggling and encouraged FDA to embrace harm reduction as a way to decrease cigarette smoking rather than pursue prohibitionist policies that come with dangerous consequences. A press release that includes links to our submissions can be read [here](#).

Launching the Tholos THR Website

We are excited to announce the creation of tholosfoundation.org/thr, our headquarters for all Tholos' efforts on tobacco harm reduction. From our page you can learn more about our educational efforts and access all of our webinars, polling data, releases, and more!

Joining Twitter

In an effort to broaden our reach and further promote our educational efforts on THR, Tholos recently joined Twitter. For news, upcoming events, and more, please **check us out and follow our work at** twitter.com/tholos.



MUST-READ ARTICLES OF THE MONTH

1. [The EU's Bizarre Plan to Beat Cancer by Protecting Cigarette Sales](#) by Martin Cullip in *Filter*.

This piece from Martin Cullip, an international fellow at the Taxpayers Protection Alliance, discusses the European Commission's reported plan to prohibit flavored heated tobacco products in EU member states. The article covers success stories in Japan, South Korea, and Europe that illustrate why this proposal would be a public health disaster.

"It is difficult to imagine a more counterproductive anti-cancer measure than one which obstructs a safer alternative to cigarettes".

2. [Delusional Anti-vaping Ignoramuses](#) by Christopher Snowden in *Velvet Glove, Iron Fist*.

Anti-vaping advocacy is rooted in disinformation and fear-mongering myths. This piece combats some recent arguments that have been made in Australia, where as author Christopher Snowden puts it, the "health establishment is so detached from reality that all you can do is laugh at it". The article is funny, engaging, and does a great job of calling out anti-vaping claims as the lies they are.

3. [Europe's Flavour Ban Epidemic Must End](#) by Michael Landl in *The Brussels Times*.

This article from Michael Landl, Director of the World Vapers' Alliance, combines real-world examples with scientific evidence to make a strong argument against Europe's epidemic of flavor ban proposals. Michael's piece uses polling data from the Tholos Foundation in Estonia which found that in the wake of a flavor ban, "[60% of vapers kept using](#) flavours by mixing their liquids or obtaining them from the black market without any quality or safety control".

4. [Bongbong Marcos urged to seize opportunity to save Filipino smokers, sign Vape Bill into law](#) by Dennis Gutierrez in *The Inquirer*.

This piece covers the opinions of respected scientists and medical experts who asked President Marcos to sign the Vape Bill and to save the Philippine's 16 million smokers from the harmful impacts of combustible cigarettes. Thankfully,

the bill has become law but it is still useful to review the statements of health experts who understand the benefits of harm reduction.

5. [Public Health's Misinformation Against Vaping Is Eroding Its Credibility](#) by Martin Cullip in *InsideSources*.

Kudos to Martin Cullip for releasing two excellent articles in the same month. We typically refrain from highlighting the same author twice in the same newsletter but this piece was too good to leave out. In the wake of the UK's independent review on achieving a smoke-free 2030, the article details how prevalent misinformation is among public health officials and lays out a convincing case that such lies are eroding the public's trust in them.

MUST-READ STUDY OF THE MONTH

[Young adult responses to taxes on cigarettes and electronic nicotine delivery systems](#) by Dr. Abigail Friedman and Dr. Michael Pesko in *Addiction*.

Dr. Friedman and Dr. Pesko, two of the United State's most prominent harm reduction researchers, authored this study together that assessed the effect of taxes on combustible cigarettes and e-cigarettes among 18-25 year olds. The study found that increases in e-cigarette taxes decrease vaping use, but increase smoking rates. An excerpt from an [interview](#) Dr. Friedman gave to YaleNews is provided below.

“Anyone who is going to levy a tax on one tobacco or nicotine product needs to think about the tax rates on all the others,” she said. “Because if people are substituting between products and you raise the price of one, some subset is going to switch to a less expensive option, even if they don’t like that product as much. From a public health perspective, it is important that that less expensive option is also less harmful.”

RESOURCE: UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND VAPE SCIENCE SUMMARY



I wanted to highlight an excellent resource that has recently become available

online. Dr. Janni Leung of the University of Queensland in Australia explains the main conclusions that can be drawn from the current body of research on vaping. The summary is thorough and informative, covering a range of topics. If you, like us at the Tholos Foundation, are consistently drawing upon scientific evidence to make strong arguments in favor of harm reduction, this summary is a great resource to have at your disposal. You can read Dr. Leung's summary [here](#).

WHAT ARE THEY SMOKING?: FDA SEEMINGLY ADMITS TO IGNORING EVIDENCE

It's easy to assume that certain public health officials have long been ignoring scientific evidence when siding with prohibitionists. In the case of FDA's Juul decision, they seem to have been [caught](#) red handed. After issuing a highly-publicized marketing denial order to Juul, FDA backtracked on their decision after Juul alleged in court that 6,000 pages of toxicological data were ignored. Why did FDA backtrack? They said it was because of "scientific issues" that needed "additional review" (aka the evidence they got caught ignoring).

It's worthwhile to ask ourselves: If FDA willfully ignored evidence to achieve their preferred policy outcome with Juul, what else have they been ignoring? Consistently poor decision making indicates quite a lot.

GLOBAL TOBACCO HARM REDUCTION NEWS

[Philippines: Pro-Consumer Vaping Bill Becomes Law \(Vaping360\)](#)

[The Portuguese plan Against Cancer threatens vaping \(World Vapers Alliance\)](#)

[Global Vape Groups Call on Australian Govt. to End Attack on Legal Vape Businesses \(Vaping Post\)](#)

[New Review Looks Into The Risks And Benefits of Heated Tobacco Products \(Vaping Post\)](#)

[Smoking out the enemy: How Ukraine is using e-cigarettes to fight a drone war against Russia \(The Independent\)](#)

**SUBMIT YOUR
WORK!**

Each newsletter will include five must-read stories and one must-read study we believe are excellent contributions to the cause of tobacco harm reduction.

If you write or publish something that you'd like to



have shared in our next newsletter, please send it to kabramson@tholosfoundation.org. Thank you!

Do you know of any international THR movements that you think the Tholos Foundation should be involved with? It could be a proposed flavor ban, tax hike, or even government-sponsored misinformation. We are looking to contribute as much as possible so please do not hesitate to reach out to me at kabramson@tholosfoundation.org.

**WE WELCOME
ADVOCACY
SUGGESTIONS**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This newsletter will be written and distributed by Karl Abramson, a Consumer Policy Fellow at the Tholos Foundation. Karl is a student at Rice University in Houston, TX. He previously interned at Americans for Tax Reform working on consumer policy with a focus on harm reduction.

Karl's work on vaping and tobacco policy has been featured in The Hill, The Washington Times, RealClearPolicy, and InsideSources. His complete professional experience can be viewed on his [LinkedIn](#).

THANK YOU FOR READING!

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Tholos Foundation | 722 12th St. NW, 4th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005 | tholosfoundation.org