

2024-0024



## OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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**TO:** Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk  
**FROM:** Councilmember John Courage, District 9  
**COPIES:** Erik Walsh, City Manager; Andy Segovia, City Attorney; Joe Frank Picazo, Interim Assistant to the City Manager; Emily McGinn, Assistant to the City Council  
**SUBJECT:** B. R. E. A. T. H (Building Regulations Enhancing Anti-vaping Trends & Habits)  
**DATE:** September 5, 2024

### Issue for Proposed Consideration

After coordinating this Council Consideration Request (CCR) with the City Manager, I respectfully request for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee:

Requesting consideration of B. R. E. A. T. H (Building Regulations Enhancing Anti-vaping Trends & Habits)

### Brief Background

I ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee.

Establishing a 1,000 foot buffer zone around schools, daycares and institutions of higher education that prohibits the retail establishment of primarily e-cigarettes/vapes, hookah, and other tobacco to include mobile vending.

### Brief Background

The City of San Antonio is currently grappling with a concerning rise in vaping among its youth, a trend that has rapidly evolved into a significant public health issue. Recent reports indicate that 3,650 cases of vaping have been identified within the Northside Independent School District (NSISD), North East Independent School District (NEISD), San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD), and Judson Independent School District just in the last school year.<sup>4</sup>

Alarmingly, over 5,700 teens nationwide begin vaping every day, contributing to a growing epidemic that threatens the health and well-being of our community's young people.<sup>5</sup>

According to Texas Health and Human Services, several factors contribute to the surge in vaping among teenagers. Many teens mistakenly believe that vaping is less harmful than traditional



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smoking, making it an appealing alternative. The trendy and fashionable image of vaping, coupled with the influence of friends and family who vape, further perpetuates its popularity. Additionally, the availability of various flavors like bubblegum and watermelon adds to its allure, while the small and easily concealable nature of vaping devices makes them accessible to underage users. As a result, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that one in four teens now use e-cigarettes or vapes daily.<sup>6</sup>

Adolescent vaping and e-cigarette use pose significant health risks that have been increasingly documented by public health organizations. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), e-cigarettes contain harmful substances, including nicotine, which is highly addictive and can harm brain development in adolescents. The U.S. Surgeon General reports that nicotine exposure during adolescence can disrupt the formation of neural connections in the brain, affecting attention, learning, and impulse control. Additionally, the aerosol produced by e-cigarettes can contain other harmful chemicals, such as volatile organic compounds, heavy metals, and cancer-causing agents like formaldehyde. Studies published by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) have also shown that adolescents who use e-cigarettes are more likely to transition to smoking traditional cigarettes, further compounding the long-term health risks. These findings underscore the urgency of implementing measures to protect young people from the dangers associated with vaping and e-cigarette use.

The proximity of vape shops to schools is a critical concern that exacerbates this issue. A study conducted by the National Center for Biotechnology Information highlights a troubling correlation between the presence of vape shops near schools and the initiation and sustained use of tobacco products among adolescents. The study found that many vape shops are strategically located close to schools, mirroring the tactics historically employed by the traditional tobacco industry to recruit young smokers. This proximity not only increases the visibility of vaping products to impressionable students but also normalizes their use, leading to higher rates of adolescent e-cigarette consumption.<sup>7</sup>

Given these findings, the City of San Antonio must take decisive action to protect its youth from the harmful effects of vaping. The proposed zoning ordinance aims to regulate the location of vape shops, particularly in relation to public and private schools. By creating buffer zones around educational institutions, the city seeks to reduce the accessibility and appeal of vaping products to minors, thereby curbing the ongoing epidemic and promoting a healthier future for all residents.

### Request





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Amending the Unified Development Code, *Article III Zoning*, that retail tobacco stores, including vape shops shall not be permitted within 1,000 feet of a public or private school, daycare, or institution of higher education.

Submitted for Council consideration by:

John Courage

Councilmember John Courage, District 9

Supporting Councilmembers' Signatures (exactly 4)

District

1. [Signature]

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2. [Signature]

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3. [Signature]

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4. [Signature]

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