

Democrats press FDA to proceed with destruction of the vaping market - we respond

written by Clive Bates | 1 June 2017



Nobody knew nicotine policy could be so complicated

Earlier in May, eleven Democrat senators appeared to be channelling [talking points from the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids](#) when they wrote a [letter](#) to the incoming FDA Commissioner Dr Scott Gottlieb.

Together with my co-conspirator, Sally Satel from the American Enterprise Institute, we have responded firmly but fairly with an article in Forbes: [Senators' Letter To FDA Commissioner Gottlieb Perpetuates Misconceptions About E-Cigarettes](#) [[pdf](#)]

I have no doubt the senators are well-meaning and feel strongly about adolescent smoking and vaping. We do too. Unfortunately, they were misled about pretty much everything. We described the simple story told by the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids as...

... a predatory industry uses child-like flavors to hook kids on vaping and ultimately to get them to smoke.

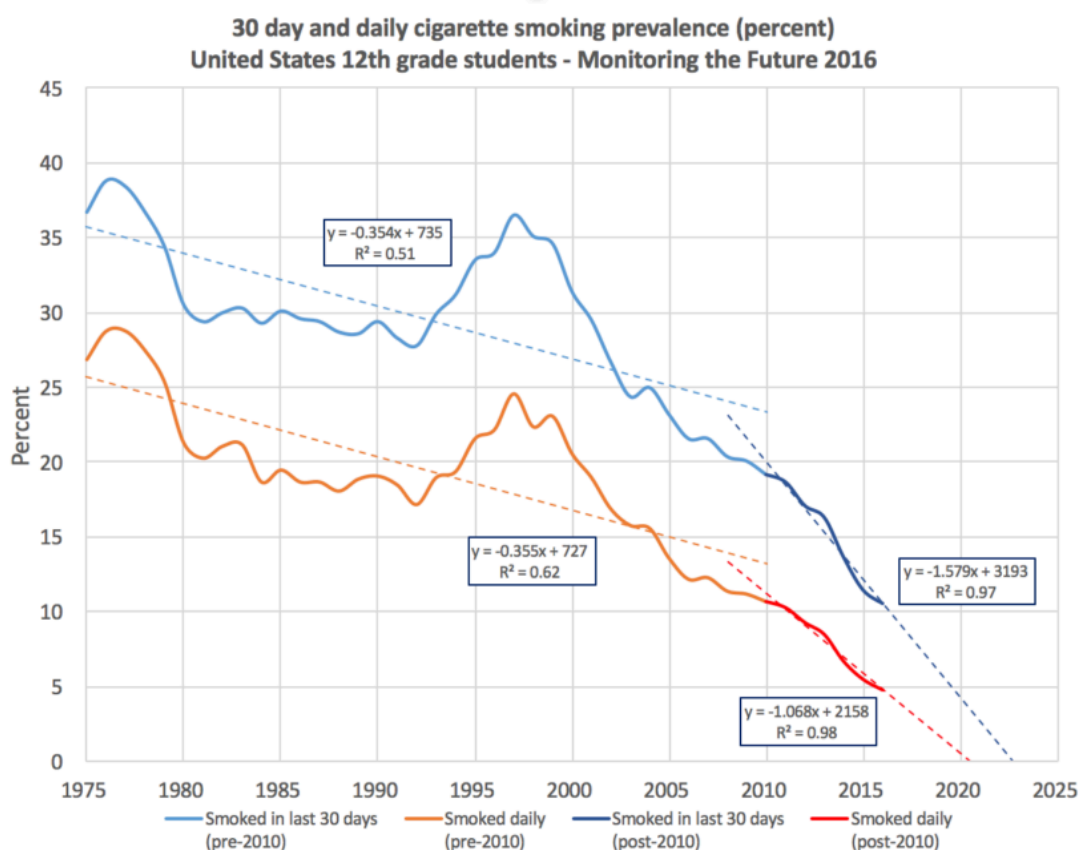
As we show in the article:

It's a compelling story, but it just isn't true.

It is far more likely that vaping is *displacing* smoking and acting as a beneficial alternative to those who smoke or would smoke in the absence of e-cigarettes.

More background: [Are e-liquid flavours really 'hooking another generation of kids'?](#) (spoiler: "no")

Recall the pattern of teen cigarette smoking since 2010: the decline in past-30-day smoking prevalence is four times the average rate of the previous 35 years and three times for daily smoking prevalence ([data](#)).



This is not *proof* that teenage vaping is *causing* the steeper decline of course, but it is consistent with that being the case - and there is nothing inevitable about permanent decline. However, it is definitely not an obvious basis for a moral panic about e-cigarettes.