



Richard A E D Pruen

Rishi Sunak MP
10 Downing Street
London
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Subject: The ban on disposable cigarettes

Dear Prime Minister,

I am a consumer advocate for vaping (15 years and vaper for 16), and do not use disposables beyond experimenting to see what they are like. I am also an engineer. I have worked in the vaping industry previously testing against the standards for vaping products, and owned a now closed company BTC Battery Testing LTD (closed 2016). Currently I care for my mother who suffers vascular dementia, and as such volunteer my spare time to the cause of THR.

Regarding the subject. Might I remind you that Australia has already taken this path, an effective ban, over 50 fire bombings, at least 3 gang style murders, and a rampant illegal trade has resulted. It simply won't work.

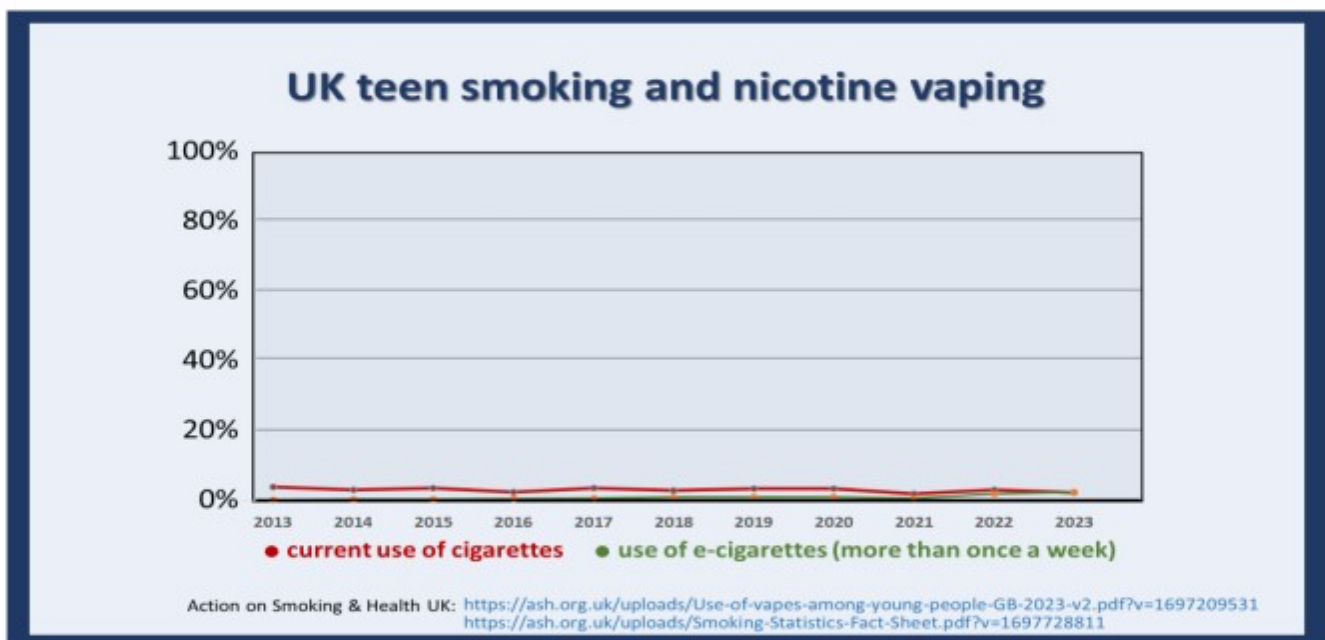
I am aware you have children, and they are potentially at the age to start experimenting with adult products. The prohibitionist faction may have played on this, and convinced you that a ban is enforceable, sadly if Australia cannot do it, the proximity of Europe means less chance here. This is simply being realistic. The best, perhaps only, way to control the illicit trade to to make sure there is a legal trade that makes it less profitable, the US abandoned alcohol prohibition in favour of this.

Please however remain focused on preventing harm, having the only source of disposable vapes (sorry to say this but it is true) that your children could possibly buy, being from a 'dealer' who might supply other illicit substances, that is **not safer!** At least if they are from a shop selling tested, safe devices, then that is a huge reduction in harm already, avoiding interaction with drug dealers. I would prefer the shop followed the law, but as we know not everyone will. Your children might also sample smoking, especially if they sensibly avoid illicit substance dealers, this too is not exactly a win, smoking being deadly and carcinogenic.

You are not the only one being pressured, ASH NZ who also support vaping, please see the tweet linked here:
<https://x.com/ASHNZ2025/status/1757930273751363892?s=20>

"Disappointing that @HealthCoA lump ASH in with tobacco industry in an OIA request rather than ask us. Is a smear campaign coming our way? On the record ASH has no \$\$\$ or COI with tobacco, vape, alcohol, gambling, pharmaceutical, retail, food, or billionaire philanthropist" <a letter from the NZ government is attached to the tweet>

I apologise for the somewhat robust and direct letter, but I feel you are about to make a huge mistake. I would regret it on behalf of current cigarette smokers, some of whom will die, and those who return to smoking because they use a banned product, some of those too will die. Meanwhile it will not help your children, or anyone else's to drive all sales to illicit/criminal markets.



Please see the above graph, so far regular use is not high and may be displacing cigarettes, sensible regulations to keep it that way, those would be welcome.

A few truths to bear in mind:

Infrequent trial use isn't the best indicator of dependence, vaping doesn't kill children nor is it likely ever to do so, smoking cigarettes does kill adults, reasonable regulation results in overall lowest harm. Millions of lives are at stake, and billions of pounds the NHS spend on cancer treatments that could be eliminated, smoking is the leading cause of preventable death, vaping regulated nicotine products, zero deaths in 20 years. The less popular you make vaping, the more popular smoking will become, they are substitutes.

I would like to hear your thoughts, I will be happy to provide evidence to support what I have said, if required for any point please let me know.

Thank you for your time, and please do not take this lightly!

Yours sincerely,

Richard Pruen

P.S. If you are looking to be remembered, saving lives is better by far, than following Australia (where 92% supply is by criminals) and creating a huge illegal market, with everything that entails.