

*E-Cigarette Epidemic

(Continued from page 2.)
 we have been very successful in reducing youth usage of traditional tobacco products, the alternative nicotine products are targeting our kids just like their traditional counterparts," explained Sandra Shelton, Executive Director of The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi. "The tactics the industry is recycling include marketing specifically to kids and offering over 15,000 flavors to attract youth. Nicotine is highly addictive and dangerous for developing brains. And because of this, we are looking forward to working with Attorney General Hood, the Mississippi State Department of Health and other partners to educate youth and the adults in their lives about the truth of these products."

General Hood sent a letter to school officials across the state warning them about the use of e-cigarettes among students and sharing information and resources to help them address the increasing use and offer his office's support and partnership in this fight to protect our children.

He also sent a warning letter to e-cigarette retailers of six national chains—Walgreens, Walmart, Family Dollar, Dollar General, Tobacco Superstores, and Kroger—and the convenience store association in Mississippi to encourage them to stop selling vaping products.

He encouraged them to act as good corporate citizens

like CVS, which stopped selling tobacco in 2015.

The letter stated the dangers these products pose and the fact that teenagers are buying them underage. The letter asks that the companies "take conclusive action

to ensure that your company does not sell e-cigarettes to persons under 18 years of age."

"I am especially alarmed that this largely unregulated industry is creating a new pathway for addiction in

adults as well as our youth," General Hood wrote in the letter to retailers. "As an entity doing business in Mississippi, I strongly encourage you to set the standard for good corporate citizenship and ask that you stand

with me to protect the health and well-being of our citizens."

Research from Mississippi Tobacco Data shows that while traditional cigarette use among Mississippi high schoolers is at an all-time

low of 7.2 percent, the use of e-cigarettes by that same group has reached 11.5 percent.

The National Academies of Sciences concluded there is substantial evidence that tobacco naïve youth

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