



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

## State Senator Gustavo Rivera Introduces Bill to Tax Electronic Cigarette Cartridges in the State Senate

GUSTAVO RIVERA February 12, 2014

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**(Albany, NY)** – Today, Senator Gustavo Rivera introduced a bill in the State Senate that would tax electronic cigarette cartridges as a tobacco product in an effort to continue the pursuit of reducing New Yorker's exposure to nicotine and other damaging chemicals. This bill has also been introduced in the State Assembly by Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz.

“In recent years, makers of electronic cigarettes have claimed they are a 'safer' alternative to cigarettes, but the simple truth is that these devices still expose individuals to nicotine and hazardous chemicals,” said Senator Gustavo Rivera (D-Bronx). “Taxing electronic cigarette cartridges at the same rate as other tobacco products will send a clear message to the public that these products are not as safe as they are advertised to be.”

To date, electronic cigarettes have not been sufficiently studied to allow the U.S. Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to determine the long-term health risks associated with their use, including the quantity of nicotine or other harmful chemicals that users inhale. Furthermore, there is no hard evidence to support the claim that electronic cigarettes are an effective cessation tool.

There is also a growing concern that electronic cigarettes can lead young people to become cigarette smokers. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), from 2011 to 2012 the number of students in grades 6 -12 that reported ever having used an electronic cigarette doubled from 3.3 percent to 6.8 percent.

“E-cigarettes aren't the safe alternative the industry makes them out to be,” said Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (D-Bronx). “It's a product that contains nicotine as well as other unknown chemicals and therefore should fall into the same category as other tobacco products, including being taxed as a tobacco product. These devices are marketed as smoking cessation tools,

when in actuality they are anything but. New York has always been a leader among states and this is no exception. We will not wait around for the federal government to act.”

While the FDA has yet to determine how to regulate electronic cigarettes, New York State along with other localities and states have moved forward with legislation to address public health concerns caused by the wide-spread use of these devices.

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