

Rhode Island is latest state to bar flavored vape products

September 25 2019



In this April 16, 2019, file photo, a woman exhales a puff of vapor from a Juul pen in Vancouver, Wash. Juul is the largest U.S. seller of electronic cigarettes, controlling about 70% of the market. The San Francisco-based company rose to the top through viral marketing that promoted high-nicotine pods with dessert and fruit flavors. (AP Photo/Craig Mitchelldyer, File)

Rhode Island became the latest state to restrict e-cigarettes Wednesday when Gov. Gina Raimondo signed an executive order banning the sale of flavored vaping products.

The ban was motivated by a desire to protect children, the Democrat said.

"I hear from parents and teachers and coaches that the use of flavored [e-cigarettes](#) among teenagers and [middle school students](#) is alarming and rising and scary," Raimondo said at a news conference.

She held up a colorful box of strawberry flavored products at one point.

"That looks like a cereal box," she said. "What adult do you know drinks strawberry milk? Chocolate milk? This is targeted at kids. Our kids."

She is directing the state Department of Health to create regulations based on her order.

State health director Dr. Nicole Alexander-Scott said the regulations could be put in place by early next week and would be effective for four months, with the option to extend them another two months.

Raimondo's decision comes a day after Republican Gov. Charlie Baker in neighboring Massachusetts ordered a four-month ban on the sale of all vaping products.

At least two other states, Michigan and New York, have banned vape flavors.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says more than 500 confirmed and probable cases of lung illnesses and nine deaths nationwide have been attributed to vaping.

The CDC has not identified a common product or ingredient responsible for the illnesses.

The Rhode Island Department of Health has not reported any vaping-related illnesses.

Protesters opposed to Raimondo's order gathered outside the Statehouse and said any restrictions on [vaping](#) products would hurt businesses and drive people back to tobacco products.

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