

AB 762 (Irwin) Single-Use Vaporizers

Summary

Single-use vapes pose a significant environmental, safety, and public health issue. AB 762 would prohibit the sale of single-use vapes in California, fostering the transition to reusable or refillable alternatives.

Background

Single-use vapes have surged in popularity due to their convenience. More than 12 million disposable vapes are sold every month in the U.S. These vapes are classified as acute single-use hazardous waste by the EPA and are not able to be recycled with other plastic waste. The lack of a standardized recycling process has led a rapidly-increasing number of vapes to be landfilled.

Widespread public health concerns about vaping led to the ban of flavored tobacco in e-cigarettes. SB 793 (Hill, Ch. 34, Statutes of 2020) prohibited tobacco retailers from selling or possessing flavored tobacco products and flavor enhancers. While the legal age to purchase a vape is 21, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, over 55 percent of minors that use vapes reported using disposable vapes.

Need for the Bill

Single-use vapes contain lithium ion batteries that are not intended to be recharged and can cause costly safety risks once in the waste stream. Lithium ion batteries are highly flammable and difficult to extinguish if ignited. Materials recovery facility (MRF) fires have increased due to the influx in processing of single use vapes. Vapes fires pose threats to worker safety and create costly cleanup issues for facility owners and local governments. The U.K. has linked increased disposable vape waste with a 77 percent rise in battery fires at MRFs.

Not only do single-use vapes pose threats to MRFs, they waste valuable resources. The amount of lithium in single-use vapes discarded each year could power more than 2,600 electric vehicle batteries. Instead, after an average of one week of use, single-use vapes are processed and sent to landfills where they leach nicotine salts, lead, mercury, and battery acid into the surrounding environment.

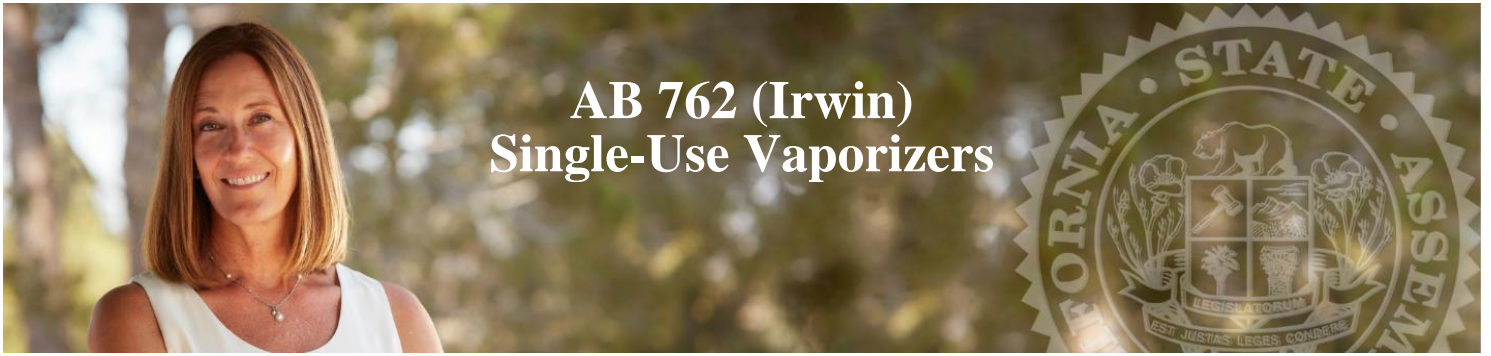
This Bill

AB 762 prohibits the sale of single-use disposable vapes by:

- Banning the import, sale, and distribution of single-use disposable vaporizer products in California, effective January 1, 2026;
- Requiring that vape devices have a removable battery, and be rechargeable and refillable.

Support

Californians Against Waste (Cosponsor)
California Product Stewardship Council (Cosponsor)
California Public Interest Research Group (Cosponsor)
RethinkWaste (Cosponsor)
ACR Solar
Action on Smoking and Health
Active San Gabriel Valley
Albatross Coalition
Algalita Marine Research and Education
Azul
Ban Single-Use Plastic
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners
California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Stockton
Environmental Justice Program
Chico Bag
Community Environmental Council
Courage California
Clean Water Action
Defenders of Wildlife



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Ecology Center
Endangered Habitats League
Families Advocating for Chemical and Toxics Safety (FACTS)
Friends Committee on Legislation of California
Ivan's Recycling
Los Angeles Waterkeeper
Marin Sanitary Service
National Stewardship Action Council (NSAC)
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
Northern California Recycling Association
Oceanic Preservation Society
Plastic Free Future
Plastic Pollution Coalition
Product Stewardship Institute
ReGen Monterey
Republic Services
ReThink Disposable
Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority
Santa Barbara County Resource Recovery and Waste Management Division
Save Our Shores
Save the Bay
Simply Recycle
SoCal 350 Climate Action
Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA)
Legislative Task Force
The Last Plastic Straw
The Surfrider Foundation
The 5 Gyres Institute
Torus Consulting
TRI-CED Community Recycling
tUrn Climate Action
Upstream
Waste Management
West Marin Environmental Action Coalition
Wilmington Recyclers
Zero Waste Marin
Zero Waste San Diego
Zero Waste Sonoma
7th Generation Advisors

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