

Paris June 8, 2018

Prof Hon. Joseph Lee, SBS, JP  
Chairman, Panel on Health Services, Legislative Council  
By email: [panel\\_hs@legco.gov.hk](mailto:panel_hs@legco.gov.hk)

Dear Professor Lee and Honourable Members of the Panel,

I am writing in response to the agenda item 'Legislative proposal to regulate electronic cigarettes and other new tobacco products', which scheduled to be discussed on the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

As a practicing oncologist in France, I am currently the Adjunct Professor of Medicine, Department of Breast diseases, at the MD Anderson Cancer Center, University of Texas. I have also been one of the members of the steering committee of the World Alliance of Cancer Research organizations and am also associated Editor of the Journal of Clinical Oncology and Cancer.

I have studied extensively on how diet plays a role on reducing the risk of cancer<sup>1</sup>. Smoking is positively carcinogenic from the very first cigarette, unlike frying or barbeque food, although potentially carcinogenic, they are still acceptable on an occasional basis. What is in common here is the risk factor that could causes cancer – combustion or very high temperature treatment. When food is treated with high temperatures, highly carcinogenic substances appear in the smoke around the person who is cooking, as well as on and inside the food itself. Similarly, there are more than 6000 different chemicals generated from burning of a cigarette, many of which are harmful or potentially harmful.

As a longtime policy advisor on anti-cancer measures, including tobacco control policy, I have always advised my patients and the public that quitting smoking is the best thing they can do for their health. I also developed the French National (2002-2006) anti-cancer plan in the early 2000s, and anti-smoking measures were at the core of that plan.

Over the last several years, I have seen electronic cigarettes and, later, heat-not-burn (HnB) tobacco products introduced into France and across Europe. Although I was at first concerned and skeptical, I have reviewed the science on HnB and found the product to be fundamentally different from and I am convinced they are significantly less hazardous than cigarettes. I believe that smokers who cannot stop smoking who switch to them would reduce their risks significantly. By heating and not burning the tobacco, there is a substantial reduction in the harmful and potentially harmful chemicals (HPHCs) in the aerosol that produced comparing to cigarette smoke. There is also a significant reduction in toxicity and users' and bystanders' exposure to HPHCs comparing to cigarette.

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<sup>1</sup> Khayat, David, 2015. The Anti-cancer Diet. ISBN 978-0-393-24647-6

Although I am strongly anti-smoking, I have been convinced by the science on e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products and have agreed to consult with Philip Morris to advise them on how to share the scientific findings with the scientific and medical experts, because I think it is important. I believe that these non-combustible alternatives can be an important intermediate option for smokers to reduce their risks quickly. Smokers and public health would benefit if less harmful alternatives such as these are made available and also regulated in a way to encourage smokers to give up cigarettes or switch to HnB products, which is known to be very harmful.

I hope the above opinion provides a perspective on the subject matter which is going to be discussed soon in the Legislative Council Panel of Health Service. I hereby wishing all councilors a very fruitful and successful discussion.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. David Khayat

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Khayat', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.