

NY Times Editorial Board gets it wrong on EU e-cigarette regulations

By Gil Ross — March 3, 2014

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Last week, European lawmakers [decided on](#) ^[1] their regulatory

program for tobacco, increasing government oversight of e-cigarettes. As discussed in *Dispatch* last week, these regulations include banning advertising of electronic cigarettes, limiting the size of personal vaporizers, mandating large graphic warnings and setting levels on the amount of nicotine permitted in the devices.

Although we do agree with specific legislation regulating sales to minors, a [current editorial published](#) ^[2] by the *New York Times* Editorial Board points to a CDC study to support the idea that electronic cigarette use is growing among American teens. Upon closer investigation, this interpretation of this study was found to be completely distorted. And as we've [discussed previously](#) ^[3], a review of the actual data behind the report, from the National Youth Tobacco Survey, revealed a different picture from the scary scenario painted in the CDC's press juggernaut. The number of teens actually using e-cigarettes (vaping) more than once a month was tiny.

And now, the Editorial Board says that our own FDA should take the European regulations into account when making decisions on how to regulate e-cigarettes in the United States.

E-cigarettes have absolutely nothing in them that may harm anyone, so restrictions make absolutely no sense and will serve only to scare those 44 million addicted smokers from turning to a device that can save their lives. Furthermore, the level of nicotine now allowed in e-cigarettes in Europe will make these devices completely inadequate for medium and heavy smokers, thereby defeating the purpose of e-cigarettes as a method of tobacco harm reduction. The EU might as well be telling those addicted smokers to keep on smoking. So no, the FDA should not use the EU

as an example when deciding on e-cigarette regulation. Instead, they should use sound science to promote public health.

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[1] <http://acsh.org/2014/02/eu-enacts-harmful-restrictions-e-cigs-worse/>

[2] http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/02/opinion/sunday/regulating-electronic-cigarettes.html?_r=1

[3] <http://acsh.org/2013/11/e-cigarettes-gateway-nowhere-slope-slippery/>