

September 22, 2021

The Hon. Gavin Newsom
Governor
State Capitol
Sacramento CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

As health leaders, child advocates, and parents, we urge you to veto two harmful cannabis and hemp industry bills, AB 1302 and AB 45. These bills represent a threat to public health and to children and young people, and they undermine the public health protections that were written into Prop 64. We appeal to you as a parent, a child advocate, and as the leader of cannabis legalization in our state.

AB 1302 will allow cannabis billboards on California interstate highways, violating the promises made to the voters in Proposition 64 which explicitly limited billboard advertising and promised the nation's most stringent child protections. Throughout the state, cannabis billboards are currently targeting children and young people with young, teen-like models and with cannabis products that mimic JUUL or are candy, cookies, sodas and other items attractive to children. This bill will expose even more children and young people to these messages by allowing for billboards on interstate highways, in clear violation of Prop 64.

AB 45 will allow our mainstream food supply, available to kids, to be adulterated with CBD and THC, two licensed pharmaceuticals, and will open the door for supplements and pet products full of cannabinoids. Under AB 45's weak rules, hemp sodas or cookies can be sold to kids with more THC than a legal cannabis edible. An 11th hour amendment also legalized production of hemp smoking and vaping products, including the same kind of flavored products the Legislature just banned for tobacco last year with your support, creating a new path to hook kids on smoking. AB 45 also undermines the cannabis taxation system by allowing untaxed hemp CBD and THC products. In the campaign to pass Prop 64, you promised voters that cannabis revenues would, in part, go to fund youth prevention services. AB 45 creates a new untaxed competitor to cannabis that will provide no funding whatsoever to children and youth services.

Please protect our kids and veto these bills.

Sincerely,

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