

Peer Review

Review of: "FDA Decision to Authorize NJOY ACE Menthol Was Based on a Rigorous Review of the Science to Determine that the Benefits Outweigh the Risk"

Hany Akeel Al-hussaniy¹

1. University of Baghdad, Iraq

This commentary addresses an important and highly debated public health topic by presenting arguments supporting the U.S. FDA authorization of menthol-flavored NJOY ACE e-cigarettes within the harm-reduction framework. The manuscript clearly articulates the regulatory concept of "Appropriate for the Protection of Public Health (APPH)" and effectively compiles evidence regarding reduced exposure to harmful and potentially harmful constituents (HPHCs), switching behavior among adult smokers, and declining youth e-cigarette prevalence trends. The article is well-structured and provides relevant regulatory and epidemiological references to support its central thesis. However, as a commentary, the manuscript would benefit from improved scientific balance and critical appraisal of opposing evidence. The narrative heavily emphasizes industry-supported harm-reduction findings while insufficiently discussing uncertainties regarding long-term cardiovascular, pulmonary, and carcinogenic risks associated with e-cigarette aerosol exposure. Additionally, greater discussion of independent population-level studies evaluating dual-use patterns, gateway hypotheses, and relapse risk would strengthen credibility and neutrality. The article also relies primarily on cross-sectional and short-term biomarker studies, which limits conclusions regarding long-term health outcomes. Furthermore, potential conflicts of interest and industry sponsorship influence should be discussed more critically to maintain transparency and reader confidence. Expanding discussion on regulatory variability across international jurisdictions and including precautionary public health perspectives would further enhance scholarly robustness. Overall, the commentary contributes meaningfully to the ongoing policy debate but would

benefit from a more balanced evidence synthesis and acknowledgment of unresolved scientific uncertainties.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.