



ROB BONTA  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



DAVID W. SUNDAY, JR.  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



STEVEN BANKS  
CORPORATION COUNSEL

THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
LAW DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2026

**Via U.S. Mail and Email**

Julie Rottenberg  
Executive Vice President & General Counsel  
Visa Inc.  
PO Box 8999  
San Francisco, CA 94128  
julie.rottenberg@visa.com

Re: Working to Stop Illegal E-cigarette Sales Transactions

Dear Ms. Rottenberg:

We are writing on behalf of the States of **Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the City of New York** to express concerns about the widespread and ongoing illegal sales of electronic cigarettes and other vaping products (collectively, “e-cigarettes”) facilitated through the use of credit cards and payment processing services, including Visa Inc.’s (“Visa”) services. Over twenty years ago, the states similarly reached out to credit card companies to work collaboratively on solutions to reduce youth access to conventional cigarettes sold online.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See B. Tedeschi, Trouble for Online Vendors of Cigarettes, N.Y. Times (Apr. 4, 2005), available at <http://nytimes.com/2005/04/04/technology/trouble-for-online-vendors-of-cigarettes.html>;

We are reaching out again, but now concerning illegal sales of e-cigarettes and requesting your assistance in addressing these illicit transactions online and at brick-and-mortar stores. Our outreach is grounded in the recognition that combating illegal e-cigarette sales requires proactive efforts between government entities and credit card and payment processing companies to stop these unlawful transactions.

By way of additional background, illegal sales of conventional cigarettes, particularly sales to youth, were prevalent in the early 2000s. Addressing this serious issue required not only robust government actions but also cooperation from the companies that enabled illegal transactions through their services such as credit card and payment processing. While important progress has been made since then to halt unlawful sales of tobacco products, particularly sales of conventional cigarettes to youth, significant work remains, largely caused by the popularity among youth of e-cigarettes that emerged in the United States market in the last fifteen years. E-cigarettes are highly addictive and pose significant health risks, particularly to youth.

Federal, state, and local governments across the nation have been working on accelerating policies and programs to reduce e-cigarette use among youth. On the federal regulatory level, every new tobacco product must receive an order from the federal Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) authorizing its marketing and sale in the United States. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 387j(a)(2)(A). To date, the FDA has authorized only 41 e-cigarette products, none in any flavor other than tobacco and menthol.<sup>2</sup> E-cigarettes that have not received authorization from the FDA, which constitute nearly all e-cigarettes offered by online sellers, are deemed “adulterated.” 21 U.S.C. § 387b(6)(A). Federal law prohibits the receipt or delivery in interstate commerce of any adulterated tobacco product, 21 U.S.C. § 331(c), and delivery or proffered delivery of adulterated tobacco products is accordingly unlawful under United States law. Of equal weight, the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act of 2009 (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. §§ 375–378 and 18 U.S.C. § 1716E, regulates online e-cigarette sales, imposing stringent requirements on online sellers that include use of age verification practices, labeling and weight requirements, and compliance with “*all* State, local, tribal, and other laws generally applicable to sales [of e-cigarettes]”. 15 U.S.C. §§ 376a, (a), (a)(3) (emphasis added). E-cigarette sellers are also subject to compliance with laws imposed by state and local governments such as, for example, age verification, licensing, and tax payment requirements. In addition, “flavor bans” have been enacted in jurisdictions such as California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New York, and New York City deeming the sale of a flavored e-cigarette in their jurisdictions a violation of state or local laws, and hence a violation of the PACT Act as well. Some states such as Connecticut, Oregon, Ohio, Maine, and Vermont completely ban online e-cigarette sales to consumers.

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<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2005/state-ag-and-atf-announce-initiative-credit-card-companies-prevent-illegal>.

<sup>2</sup> *See* U.S. Food & Drug Administration, “E-Cigarettes, ‘Vapes’ and Other Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) Authorized by the FDA,” (Apr. 1, 2026, at 11:50 ET), <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/market-and-distribute-tobacco-product/e-cigarettes-vapes-and-other-electronic-nicotine-delivery-systems-ends-authorized-fda>.

The pervasiveness of illegal e-cigarette sales and its consequent harm to public health necessitates a more comprehensive solution. The states and New York City have been working diligently to identify noncompliant sellers and have found that the vast majority of online merchants violate the PACT Act in virtually every regard. Independent studies of online merchants of vaping products report the same widespread noncompliance with the PACT Act requirements.<sup>3</sup> The states have been taking actions against illegal online sellers, including litigation and referrals of these sellers to the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (“ATF”) for inclusion on the Noncompliance List (“NCL”) established under the PACT Act, *see* 15 U.S.C. § 376a(e)(1). New York previously identified these issues to Visa in its April 10, 2024 letter. *See* Exhibit A. Recently, as part of our efforts to engage e-commerce platforms about the illegal activity enabled through their services, the states and New York City sent a letter to Shopify Inc. on November 24, 2025, highlighting the pervasive unlawful conduct by merchants selling e-cigarettes on its platform.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, our aim in this letter is to discuss the current scope of illegal e-cigarette trafficking and to work with you to halt the use of your services for unlawful transactions.

We request a meeting with Visa to discuss a comprehensive solution to address unlawful sales of vaping products regulated under federal, state, and local laws, with the goal of Visa prohibiting e-commerce service providers and merchants from using its services for unlawful purposes. Please provide a response outlining your availability within **15 days** of this letter. Visa’s response should be directed to Lesya Kinnamon at [Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov](mailto:Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov), Edmund “Tad” Berger at [eberger@attorneygeneral.gov](mailto:eberger@attorneygeneral.gov), Leslieann Cachola at [leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov](mailto:leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov), and Eric Proshansky at [eproshan@law.nyc.gov](mailto:eproshan@law.nyc.gov).

Sincerely,

**/s/ Lesya N. Kinnamon**

Lesya N. Kinnamon  
Deputy Attorney General  
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**/s/ Edmund “Tad” Berger**

Edmund “Tad” Berger  
Chief Deputy Attorney General  
Tobacco Enforcement Section  
Office of Attorney General of Pennsylvania  
15th Floor, Strawberry Square  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

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<sup>3</sup> *See* Harati RM, Ellis SE, Satybaldiyeva N, Mejorado T, Benitez G, Henriksen L, Leas EC. *Online Retailer Nonadherence to Age Verification, Shipping, and Flavor Restrictions on E-Cigarettes*. JAMA. 2024 Dec 24;332(24):2113-2114. doi: 10.1001/jama.2024.21597. PMID: 39527068; PMCID: PMC11555574.

<sup>4</sup> *See* Letter from various states to Shopify Inc. (Nov. 24, 2025), available at [https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA\\_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify\\_FINAL.pdf](https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify_FINAL.pdf).

**/s/ Leslieann E. Cachola**

Leslieann E. Cachola  
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**/s/ Douglas Lau**

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**/s/ Vanessa L. Kassab**

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Vanessa L. Kassab  
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**/s/ Andrea Law**

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**/s/ Elizabeth Reardon**

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**/s/ Eric Proshansky**

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**/s/ Amor Rosario**

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**/s/ Chelsea N. Okamoto**

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**/s/ Kara Burgess**

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**/s/ John M. Leovy**

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**/s/ Alda Chan**

Alda Chan  
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**/s/ Lorin M. Taylor**

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**/s/ Jesse J. Sierant**

Jesse J. Sierant  
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**/s/ Charles White**

Charles White  
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**/s/ Adam D. Roach**

Adam D. Roach  
Special Assistant Attorney General  
Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General  
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**/s/ Michael R Bell**

Michael R Bell  
Assistant Attorney General  
Michigan Department of Attorney General  
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**/s/Warren G. Cormack**

Warren G. Cormack  
Assistant Attorney General  
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**/s/Anthony R. Juzaitis**

Anthony R. Juzaitis  
Assistant Attorney General  
Deputy Division Director  
New Mexico Department of Justice  
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**/s/ Jackson Garcia**

Jackson Garcia  
Assistant Attorney General  
Office of the Attorney General of Oregon  
1162 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**/s/ John Sinclair**

John Sinclair  
Deputy Attorney General  
Tennessee Office of the Attorney General  
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Visa Inc.  
April 28, 2026  
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**/s/ Rosemary M. Kennedy**

Rosemary M. Kennedy  
Assistant Attorney General  
Vermont Office of the Attorney General  
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**/s/ Gregory A. Myszkowski**

Gregory A. Myszkowski  
Assistant Attorney General  
State of Wisconsin Department of Justice  
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**/s/ S. Todd Sipe**

S. Todd Sipe  
Assistant Attorney General  
Washington State Attorney General's Office  
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**/s/ Zulma Carrasquillo Almena**

Zulma Carrasquillo Almena  
Senior Assistant Attorney  
Diana Jordán-González  
Assistant Attorney  
P.O. Box 7857  
Office of Monopolistic Affairs  
Department of Justice of Puerto Rico  
PO Box 9020192  
San Juan, PR 00902

cc:

**Via U.S. Mail**

Julie Rottenberg  
Executive Vice President & General Counsel  
Visa Inc.  
900 Metro Center Blvd.  
Foster City, CA 94404

# **EXHIBIT A**



STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

EXECUTIVE DIVISION

April 15, 2024

**Via First Class Mail & Email**

Julie B. Rottenberg  
EVP & General Counsel  
Visa Inc.  
PO Box 8999  
San Francisco, CA 94128  
julie.rottenberg@visa.com

***Re: Illegal Transactions Concerning Vapor Products in New York***

Dear Ms. Rottenberg:

I am writing to request that Visa Inc. and its affiliated companies (“Visa”) take appropriate steps to ensure that Visa does not facilitate violations of New York’s laws regarding sales of vapor products intended or reasonably expected to be used with or for the consumption of nicotine (“Vapor Products”), including Article 13F of the Public Health Law (“PHL”), or the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. § 375, *et seq.* In particular, and for the reasons set forth below, we are requesting that Visa contact its acquiring banks and instruct them not to process credit card transactions for online Vapor Product retailers, unless those retailers agree to comply with New York law and cease the direct shipment of Vapor Products to New York State consumers.

Vapor products pose serious consequences to public health. According to New York State Department of Health data, youth and young adults are the primary users of e-cigarettes, and e-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product by high school students in New York State.<sup>1</sup> Data from the 2022 New York Youth Tobacco Survey showed that 18.7% of high school youth use e-cigarettes.<sup>2</sup> Flavorings in tobacco products make them even more appealing to youth.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, in 2023, 90.3% of high school students and 87.1% of middle school students

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco\\_control/campaign/e-cigarettes/](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/campaign/e-cigarettes/)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco\\_control/reports/statshots/volume15/n1\\_youth\\_tobacco\\_use.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/reports/statshots/volume15/n1_youth_tobacco_use.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

who used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days reported using a flavored e-cigarette during that time.<sup>4</sup> According to the CDC, youth use of tobacco products in any form is unsafe.<sup>5</sup>

New York State has enacted laws to protect youth from the dangers of nicotine addiction by reducing access to tobacco and vaping products. As you probably are aware, PHL § 1399-ll prohibits the shipment of Vapor Product directly to New York State consumers. In particular, that section provides that no person engaged in the business of selling Vapor Products may “ship or cause to be shipped” any Vapor Products to any person in New York State, except for shipments to: (a) licensed tax agents, wholesaler dealers, and registered retail dealers; (b) export warehouse proprietors; and (c) government employees acting within the scope of their official duties. Additionally, PHL 1399-mm-1 provides that “No vapor products dealer, or any agent or employee of a vapor products dealer, shall sell or offer for sale at retail in the state any flavored vapor product intended or reasonably expected to be used with or for the consumption of nicotine.” Many online sellers, however, continue to sell Vapor Products directly to New York consumers, even though such shipments are clearly illegal. Moreover, the vast majority of these sales are accomplished through credit card purchases, including purchases using Visa credit cards. Your company should not be facilitating these illegal sales.

In addition to the above state law prohibitions, the PACT Act provides that any business that “sells, transfers, or ships...or who advertises or offers” ENDS for sale in interstate commerce is required to register with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (“ATF”) and with state and local tax authorities in each location that applies its own tax on ENDS, and into which shipments of ENDS are made, and to file monthly reports with state and local tobacco tax administrators documenting the types and quantities of products that were sold within each respective jurisdiction during the preceding month. When ENDS are distributed via delivery sale (e.g., when a consumer submits an order via telephone, the internet, or when the person is not otherwise in the physical presence of the seller), the delivery seller must comply with certain shipping requirements, recordkeeping requirements, and all laws generally applicable to sales of ENDS as if the delivery sale occurred entirely within the specific State and place of delivery, including but limited to state laws imposing excise taxes, licensing requirements, restrictions on sales to underage individuals. 15 U.S.C. § 376a(a)(1)-(3). Thus, the PACT Act requires all delivery sellers of ENDS to consumers in New York to comply with all New York laws regulating vapor products, including its flavor ban and delivery ban.

Many online Vapor Product retailers appear to be violating the above laws. For example, the website <https://lousquare.com/pages/online-vape-shops-that-ship-to-ny> contains the following language: “Looking for online vape shops that ship to New York? Lou Square is your 24 hour vape store for all things vape, except there are actually no stops at all. You can shop our extensive range of products online, finding all your favorite brands and flavors in our collection.” Additionally, the website offers a wide array of flavored Vapor Products for sale such as Mango

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<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/youth\\_data/tobacco\\_use/](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/youth_data/tobacco_use/)



STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

EXECUTIVE DIVISION

Ice, Strawberry Kiwi, and Melon Ice, and many others. Indeed, one is able to purchase a flavored Vapor Product for delivery in New York using a Visa credit card.

For the reasons set forth above, it is clear that numerous online Vapor Products sellers: (a) are illegally selling flavored Vapor Products to consumers in New York in violation of PHL § 1399-mm-1; (b) are making shipments that constitute violations of PHL § 1399-ll; and are (c) engaging in delivery sales under 15 U.S.C. § 376a without meeting the requirements for such sales. In addition, where the sales are made to underage individuals these shipments constitute serious additional violations. Many websites make clear that they accept Visa credit cards for payment and we do not believe that your company should allow its acquiring banks to facilitate these illegal activities. Accordingly, we respectfully request that Visa contact its acquiring banks and instruct them not to process Visa credit card transactions for online Vapor Products sellers unless and until those retailers cease all shipments of Vapor Products to New York State consumers.

Thank you for your assistance, and please contact me at (212) 416-6323 or at [wil.handley@ag.ny.gov](mailto:wil.handley@ag.ny.gov) at your convenience, so that we can discuss what steps will be taken to address this issue.

Very truly yours,

s/ Wil Handley  
Wil Handley  
Assistant Attorney General  
Executive Division



ROB BONTA  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



DAVID W. SUNDAY, JR.  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



STEVEN BANKS  
CORPORATION COUNSEL

THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
LAW DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2026

**Via U.S. Mail and Email**

Trish Walsh  
General Counsel  
Stripe, Inc.  
354 Oyster Point Boulevard  
South San Francisco, CA 94080  
trish@stripe.com

Re: Working to Stop Illegal E-cigarette Sales Transactions

Dear Ms. Walsh:

We are writing on behalf of the States of **Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the City of New York** to express concerns about the widespread and ongoing illegal sales of electronic cigarettes and other vaping products (collectively, “e-cigarettes”) facilitated through the use of credit cards and payment processing services, including Stripe, Inc.’s (“Stripe”) services. Over twenty years ago, the states similarly reached out to credit card companies to work collaboratively on solutions to reduce youth access to conventional cigarettes sold online.<sup>1</sup> We are reaching out again, but now concerning illegal sales of e-cigarettes and

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<sup>1</sup> See B. Tedeschi, Trouble for Online Vendors of Cigarettes, N.Y. Times (Apr. 4, 2005), available at <http://nytimes.com/2005/04/04/technology/trouble-for-online-vendors-of-cigarettes.html>;

requesting your assistance in addressing these illicit transactions online and at brick-and-mortar stores. Our outreach is grounded in the recognition that combating illegal e-cigarette sales requires proactive efforts between government entities and credit card and payment processing companies to stop these unlawful transactions.

By way of additional background, illegal sales of conventional cigarettes, particularly sales to youth, were prevalent in the early 2000s. Addressing this serious issue required not only robust government actions but also cooperation from the companies that enabled illegal transactions through their services such as credit card and payment processing. While important progress has been made since then to halt unlawful sales of tobacco products, particularly sales of conventional cigarettes to youth, significant work remains, largely caused by the popularity among youth of e-cigarettes that emerged in the United States market in the last fifteen years. E-cigarettes are highly addictive and pose significant health risks, particularly to youth.

Federal, state, and local governments across the nation have been working on accelerating policies and programs to reduce e-cigarette use among youth. On the federal regulatory level, every new tobacco product must receive an order from the federal Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) authorizing its marketing and sale in the United States. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 387j(a)(2)(A). To date, the FDA has authorized only 41 e-cigarette products, none in any flavor other than tobacco and menthol.<sup>2</sup> E-cigarettes that have not received authorization from the FDA, which constitute nearly all e-cigarettes offered by online sellers, are deemed “adulterated.” 21 U.S.C. § 387b(6)(A). Federal law prohibits the receipt or delivery in interstate commerce of any adulterated tobacco product, 21 U.S.C. § 331(c), and delivery or proffered delivery of adulterated tobacco products is accordingly unlawful under United States law. Of equal weight, the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act of 2009 (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. §§ 375–378 and 18 U.S.C. § 1716E, regulates online e-cigarette sales, imposing stringent requirements on online sellers that include use of age verification practices, labeling and weight requirements, and compliance with “*all* State, local, tribal, and other laws generally applicable to sales [of e-cigarettes]”. 15 U.S.C. §§ 376a, (a), (a)(3) (emphasis added). E-cigarette sellers are also subject to compliance with laws imposed by state and local governments such as, for example, age verification, licensing, and tax payment requirements. In addition, “flavor bans” have been enacted in jurisdictions such as California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New York, and New York City deeming the sale of a flavored e-cigarette in their jurisdictions a violation of state or local laws, and hence a violation of the PACT Act as well. Some states such as Connecticut, Oregon, Ohio, Maine, and Vermont completely ban online e-cigarette sales to consumers.

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<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2005/state-ag-and-atf-announce-initiative-credit-card-companies-prevent-illegal>.

<sup>2</sup> *See* U.S. Food & Drug Administration, “E-Cigarettes, ‘Vapes’ and Other Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) Authorized by the FDA,” (Apr. 1, 2026, at 11:50 ET), <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/market-and-distribute-tobacco-product/e-cigarettes-vapes-and-other-electronic-nicotine-delivery-systems-ends-authorized-fda>.

The pervasiveness of illegal e-cigarette sales and its consequent harm to public health necessitates a more comprehensive solution. The states and New York City have been working diligently to identify noncompliant sellers and have found that the vast majority of online merchants violate the PACT Act in virtually every regard. Independent studies of online merchants of vaping products report the same widespread noncompliance with the PACT Act requirements.<sup>3</sup> The states have been taking actions against illegal online sellers, including litigation and referrals of these sellers to the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (“ATF”) for inclusion on the Noncompliance List (“NCL”) established under the PACT Act, *see* 15 U.S.C. § 376a(e)(1). Recently, as part of our efforts to engage e-commerce platforms about the illegal activity enabled through their services, the states and New York City sent a letter to Shopify Inc. on November 24, 2025, highlighting the pervasive unlawful conduct by merchants selling e-cigarettes on its platform.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, our aim in this letter is to discuss the current scope of illegal e-cigarette trafficking and to work with you to halt the use of your services for unlawful transactions.

We request a meeting with Stripe to discuss a comprehensive solution to address unlawful sales of vaping products regulated under federal, state, and local laws, with the goal of Stripe prohibiting e-commerce service providers and merchants from using its services for unlawful purposes. Please provide a response outlining your availability within **15 days** of this letter. Stripe’s response should be directed to Lesya Kinnamon at [Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov](mailto:Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov), Edmund “Tad” Berger at [eberger@attorneygeneral.gov](mailto:eberger@attorneygeneral.gov), Leslieann Cachola at [leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov](mailto:leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov), and Eric Proshansky at [eproshan@law.nyc.gov](mailto:eproshan@law.nyc.gov).

Sincerely,

**/s/ Lesya N. Kinnamon**

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**/s/ Edmund “Tad” Berger**

Edmund “Tad” Berger  
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---

<sup>3</sup> *See* Harati RM, Ellis SE, Satybaldiyeva N, Mejrado T, Benitez G, Henriksen L, Leas EC. *Online Retailer Nonadherence to Age Verification, Shipping, and Flavor Restrictions on E-Cigarettes*. JAMA. 2024 Dec 24;332(24):2113-2114. doi: 10.1001/jama.2024.21597. PMID: 39527068; PMCID: PMC11555574.

<sup>4</sup> *See* Letter from various states to Shopify Inc. (Nov. 24, 2025), available at [https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA\\_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify\\_FINAL.pdf](https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify_FINAL.pdf).

**/s/ Leslieann E. Cachola**

Leslieann E. Cachola  
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**/s/ Douglas Lau**

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**/s/ Vanessa L. Kassab**

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**/s/ Elizabeth Reardon**

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**/s/ Eric Proshansky**

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**/s/ Amor Rosario**

Amor Rosario  
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Heather Wilson  
Deputy Section Chief for  
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Hartford, CT 06106

**/s/ Chelsea N. Okamoto**

Chelsea N. Okamoto  
Deputy Attorney General  
Department of the Attorney General  
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Stripe, Inc.  
April 28, 2026  
Page 6

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STEVEN BANKS  
CORPORATION COUNSEL

THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
LAW DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2026

**Via U.S. Mail and Email**

Kerissa Hollis  
General Counsel & Secretary  
Sezzle Inc.  
700 Nicollet Mall, Suite 640  
Minneapolis, MN 55402  
hollis@sezzle.com

Re: Working to Stop Illegal E-cigarette Sales Transactions

Dear Ms. Hollis:

We are writing on behalf of the States of **Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the City of New York** to express concerns about the widespread and ongoing illegal sales of electronic cigarettes and other vaping products (collectively, “e-cigarettes”) facilitated through the use of credit cards and payment processing services, including Sezzle Inc.’s (“Sezzle”) services. Over twenty years ago, the states similarly reached out to credit card companies to work collaboratively on solutions to reduce youth access to conventional cigarettes sold online.<sup>1</sup> We are reaching out again, but now concerning illegal sales of e-cigarettes and

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<sup>1</sup> See B. Tedeschi, Trouble for Online Vendors of Cigarettes, N.Y. Times (Apr. 4, 2005), available at <http://nytimes.com/2005/04/04/technology/trouble-for-online-vendors-of-cigarettes.html>;

requesting your assistance in addressing these illicit transactions online and at brick-and-mortar stores. Our outreach is grounded in the recognition that combating illegal e-cigarette sales requires proactive efforts between government entities and credit card and payment processing companies to stop these unlawful transactions.

By way of additional background, illegal sales of conventional cigarettes, particularly sales to youth, were prevalent in the early 2000s. Addressing this serious issue required not only robust government actions but also cooperation from the companies that enabled illegal transactions through their services such as credit card and payment processing. While important progress has been made since then to halt unlawful sales of tobacco products, particularly sales of conventional cigarettes to youth, significant work remains, largely caused by the popularity among youth of e-cigarettes that emerged in the United States market in the last fifteen years. E-cigarettes are highly addictive and pose significant health risks, particularly to youth.

Federal, state, and local governments across the nation have been working on accelerating policies and programs to reduce e-cigarette use among youth. On the federal regulatory level, every new tobacco product must receive an order from the federal Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) authorizing its marketing and sale in the United States. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 387j(a)(2)(A). To date, the FDA has authorized only 41 e-cigarette products, none in any flavor other than tobacco and menthol.<sup>2</sup> E-cigarettes that have not received authorization from the FDA, which constitute nearly all e-cigarettes offered by online sellers, are deemed “adulterated.” 21 U.S.C. § 387b(6)(A). Federal law prohibits the receipt or delivery in interstate commerce of any adulterated tobacco product, 21 U.S.C. § 331(c), and delivery or proffered delivery of adulterated tobacco products is accordingly unlawful under United States law. Of equal weight, the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act of 2009 (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. §§ 375–378 and 18 U.S.C. § 1716E, regulates online e-cigarette sales, imposing stringent requirements on online sellers that include use of age verification practices, labeling and weight requirements, and compliance with “*all* State, local, tribal, and other laws generally applicable to sales [of e-cigarettes]”. 15 U.S.C. §§ 376a, (a), (a)(3) (emphasis added). E-cigarette sellers are also subject to compliance with laws imposed by state and local governments such as, for example, age verification, licensing, and tax payment requirements. In addition, “flavor bans” have been enacted in jurisdictions such as California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New York, and New York City deeming the sale of a flavored e-cigarette in their jurisdictions a violation of state or local laws, and hence a violation of the PACT Act as well. Some states such as Connecticut, Oregon, Ohio, Maine, and Vermont completely ban online e-cigarette sales to consumers.

---

<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2005/state-ag-and-atf-announce-initiative-credit-card-companies-prevent-illegal>.

<sup>2</sup> *See* U.S. Food & Drug Administration, “E-Cigarettes, ‘Vapes’ and Other Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) Authorized by the FDA,” (Apr. 1, 2026, at 11:50 ET), <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/market-and-distribute-tobacco-product/e-cigarettes-vapes-and-other-electronic-nicotine-delivery-systems-ends-authorized-fda>.

The pervasiveness of illegal e-cigarette sales and its consequent harm to public health necessitates a more comprehensive solution. The states and New York City have been working diligently to identify noncompliant sellers and have found that the vast majority of online merchants violate the PACT Act in virtually every regard. Independent studies of online merchants of vaping products report the same widespread noncompliance with the PACT Act requirements.<sup>3</sup> The states have been taking actions against illegal online sellers, including litigation and referrals of these sellers to the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (“ATF”) for inclusion on the Noncompliance List (“NCL”) established under the PACT Act, *see* 15 U.S.C. § 376a(e)(1). Recently, as part of our efforts to engage e-commerce platforms about the illegal activity enabled through their services, the states and New York City sent a letter to Shopify Inc. on November 24, 2025, highlighting the pervasive unlawful conduct by merchants selling e-cigarettes on its platform.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, our aim in this letter is to discuss the current scope of illegal e-cigarette trafficking and to work with you to halt the use of your services for unlawful transactions.

We request a meeting with Sezzle to discuss a comprehensive solution to address unlawful sales of vaping products regulated under federal, state, and local laws, with the goal of Sezzle prohibiting e-commerce service providers and merchants from using its services for unlawful purposes. Please provide a response outlining your availability within **15 days** of this letter. Sezzle’s response should be directed to Lesya Kinnamon at [Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov](mailto:Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov), Edmund “Tad” Berger at [eberger@attorneygeneral.gov](mailto:eberger@attorneygeneral.gov), Leslieann Cachola at [leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov](mailto:leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov), Eric Proshansky at [eproshan@law.nyc.gov](mailto:eproshan@law.nyc.gov).

Sincerely,

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---

<sup>3</sup> *See* Harati RM, Ellis SE, Satybaldiyeva N, Mejorado T, Benitez G, Henriksen L, Leas EC. *Online Retailer Nonadherence to Age Verification, Shipping, and Flavor Restrictions on E-Cigarettes*. JAMA. 2024 Dec 24;332(24):2113-2114. doi: 10.1001/jama.2024.21597. PMID: 39527068; PMCID: PMC11555574.

<sup>4</sup> *See* Letter from various states to Shopify Inc. (Nov. 24, 2025), available at [https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA\\_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify\\_FINAL.pdf](https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify_FINAL.pdf).

**/s/ Leslieann E. Cachola**

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STEVEN BANKS  
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THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
LAW DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2026

**Via U.S. Mail and Email**

Bimal Patel  
Executive Vice President & Chief Legal Officer  
PayPal Holdings, Inc.  
2211 North First Street  
San Jose, CA 95131  
bimal@paypal.com

Re: Working to Stop Illegal E-cigarette Sales Transactions

Dear Mr. Patel:

We are writing on behalf of the States of **Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the City of New York** to express concerns about the widespread and ongoing illegal sales of electronic cigarettes and other vaping products (collectively, “e-cigarettes”) facilitated through the use of credit cards and payment processing services, including PayPal Holdings, Inc.’s (“PayPal”) services. Over twenty years ago, the states similarly reached out to credit card companies to work collaboratively on solutions to reduce youth access to conventional cigarettes sold online.<sup>1</sup> We are reaching out again, but now concerning illegal sales of e-cigarettes and

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<sup>1</sup> See B. Tedeschi, Trouble for Online Vendors of Cigarettes, N.Y. Times (Apr. 4, 2005), available at <http://nytimes.com/2005/04/04/technology/trouble-for-online-vendors-of-cigarettes.html>;

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We request a meeting with PayPal to discuss a comprehensive solution to address unlawful sales of vaping products regulated under federal, state, and local laws, with the goal of PayPal prohibiting e-commerce service providers and merchants from using its services for unlawful purposes. Please provide a response outlining your availability within **15 days** of this letter. PayPal’s response should be directed to Lesya Kinnamon at Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov, Edmund “Tad” Berger at eberger@attorneygeneral.gov, Leslieann Cachola at lesieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov, and Eric Proshansky at eproshan@law.nyc.gov.

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<sup>3</sup> See Harati RM, Ellis SE, Satybaldiyeva N, Meorado T, Benitez G, Henriksen L, Leas EC. *Online Retailer Nonadherence to Age Verification, Shipping, and Flavor Restrictions on E-Cigarettes*. JAMA. 2024 Dec 24;332(24):2113-2114. doi: 10.1001/jama.2024.21597. PMID: 39527068; PMCID: PMC11555574.

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PayPal Holdings, Inc.

April 28, 2026

Page 6

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Office of Monopolistic Affairs  
Department of Justice of Puerto Rico  
PO Box 9020192  
San Juan, PR 00902



ROB BONTA  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



DAVID W. SUNDAY, JR.  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



STEVEN BANKS  
CORPORATION COUNSEL

THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
LAW DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2026

**Via U.S. Mail and Email**

Tiffany M. Hall  
General Counsel  
Mastercard Inc.  
200 Purchase Street  
Purchase, NY 10577  
tiffany.hall@mastercard.com

Re: Working to Stop Illegal E-cigarette Sales Transactions

Dear Ms. Hall:

We are writing on behalf of the States of **Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the City of New York** to express concerns about the widespread and ongoing illegal sales of electronic cigarettes and other vaping products (collectively, “e-cigarettes”) facilitated through the use of credit cards and payment processing services, including Mastercard Inc.’s (“Mastercard”) services. Over twenty years ago, the states similarly reached out to credit card companies to work collaboratively on solutions to reduce youth access to conventional cigarettes sold online.<sup>1</sup> We are reaching out again, but now concerning illegal sales of e-cigarettes and

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<sup>1</sup> See B. Tedeschi, Trouble for Online Vendors of Cigarettes, N.Y. Times (Apr. 4, 2005), available at <http://nytimes.com/2005/04/04/technology/trouble-for-online-vendors-of-cigarettes.html>;

requesting your assistance in addressing these illicit transactions online and at brick-and-mortar stores. Our outreach is grounded in the recognition that combating illegal e-cigarette sales requires proactive efforts between government entities and credit card and payment processing companies to stop these unlawful transactions.

By way of additional background, illegal sales of conventional cigarettes, particularly sales to youth, were prevalent in the early 2000s. Addressing this serious issue required not only robust government actions but also cooperation from the companies that enabled illegal transactions through their services such as credit card and payment processing. While important progress has been made since then to halt unlawful sales of tobacco products, particularly sales of conventional cigarettes to youth, significant work remains, largely caused by the popularity among youth of e-cigarettes that emerged in the United States market in the last fifteen years. E-cigarettes are highly addictive and pose significant health risks, particularly to youth.

Federal, state, and local governments across the nation have been working on accelerating policies and programs to reduce e-cigarette use among youth. On the federal regulatory level, every new tobacco product must receive an order from the federal Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) authorizing its marketing and sale in the United States. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 387j(a)(2)(A). To date, the FDA has authorized only 41 e-cigarette products, none in any flavor other than tobacco and menthol.<sup>2</sup> E-cigarettes that have not received authorization from the FDA, which constitute nearly all e-cigarettes offered by online sellers, are deemed “adulterated.” 21 U.S.C. § 387b(6)(A). Federal law prohibits the receipt or delivery in interstate commerce of any adulterated tobacco product, 21 U.S.C. § 331(c), and delivery or proffered delivery of adulterated tobacco products is accordingly unlawful under United States law. Of equal weight, the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act of 2009 (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. §§ 375–378 and 18 U.S.C. § 1716E, regulates online e-cigarette sales, imposing stringent requirements on online sellers that include use of age verification practices, labeling and weight requirements, and compliance with “*all* State, local, tribal, and other laws generally applicable to sales [of e-cigarettes]”. 15 U.S.C. §§ 376a, (a), (a)(3) (emphasis added). E-cigarette sellers are also subject to compliance with laws imposed by state and local governments such as, for example, age verification, licensing, and tax payment requirements. In addition, “flavor bans” have been enacted in jurisdictions such as California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New York, and New York City deeming the sale of a flavored e-cigarette in their jurisdictions a violation of state or local laws, and hence a violation of the PACT Act as well. Some states such as Connecticut, Oregon, Ohio, Maine, and Vermont completely ban online e-cigarette sales to consumers.

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<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2005/state-ag-and-atf-announce-initiative-credit-card-companies-prevent-illegal>.

<sup>2</sup> *See* U.S. Food & Drug Administration, “E-Cigarettes, ‘Vapes’ and Other Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) Authorized by the FDA,” (Apr. 1, 2026, at 11:50 ET), <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/market-and-distribute-tobacco-product/e-cigarettes-vapes-and-other-electronic-nicotine-delivery-systems-ends-authorized-fda>.

The pervasiveness of illegal e-cigarette sales and its consequent harm to public health necessitates a more comprehensive solution. The states and New York City have been working diligently to identify noncompliant sellers and have found that the vast majority of online merchants violate the PACT Act in virtually every regard. Independent studies of online merchants of vaping products report the same widespread noncompliance with the PACT Act requirements.<sup>3</sup> The states have been taking actions against illegal online sellers, including litigation and referrals of these sellers to the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (“ATF”) for inclusion on the Noncompliance List (“NCL”) established under the PACT Act, *see* 15 U.S.C. § 376a(e)(1). New York previously identified these issues to Mastercard in its April 10, 2024 letter. *See* Exhibit A. Recently, as part of our efforts to engage e-commerce platforms about the illegal activity enabled through their services, the states and New York City sent a letter to Shopify Inc. on November 24, 2025, highlighting the pervasive unlawful conduct by merchants selling e-cigarettes on its platform.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, our aim in this letter is to discuss the current scope of illegal e-cigarette trafficking and to work with you to halt the use of your services for unlawful transactions.

We request a meeting with Mastercard to discuss a comprehensive solution to address unlawful sales of vaping products regulated under federal, state, and local laws, with the goal of Mastercard prohibiting e-commerce service providers and merchants from using its services for unlawful purposes. Please provide a response outlining your availability within **15 days** of this letter. Mastercard’s response should be directed to Lesya Kinnamon at Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov, Edmund “Tad” Berger at eberger@attorneygeneral.gov, Leslieann Cachola at leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov, and Eric Proshansky at eproshan@law.nyc.gov.

Sincerely,

**/s/ Lesya N. Kinnamon**

Lesya N. Kinnamon  
Deputy Attorney General  
California Office of the Attorney General  
1300 I Street, Suite 125  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**/s/ Edmund “Tad” Berger**

Edmund “Tad” Berger  
Chief Deputy Attorney General  
Tobacco Enforcement Section  
Office of Attorney General of Pennsylvania  
15th Floor, Strawberry Square  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

---

<sup>3</sup> *See* Harati RM, Ellis SE, Satybaldiyeva N, Mejorado T, Benitez G, Henriksen L, Leas EC. *Online Retailer Nonadherence to Age Verification, Shipping, and Flavor Restrictions on E-Cigarettes*. JAMA. 2024 Dec 24;332(24):2113-2114. doi: 10.1001/jama.2024.21597. PMID: 39527068; PMCID: PMC1155574.

<sup>4</sup> *See* Letter from various states to Shopify Inc. (Nov. 24, 2025), available at [https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA\\_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify\\_FINAL.pdf](https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify_FINAL.pdf).

**/s/ Leslieann E. Cachola**

Leslieann E. Cachola  
Deputy Bureau Chief  
New York State Office of the Attorney General  
28 Liberty Street  
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**/s/ Douglas Lau**

Douglas Lau  
Unit Chief – Tobacco Enforcement Unit  
Office of the Arizona Attorney General  
2005 N. Central Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85004

**/s/ Vanessa L. Kassab**

Ian R. Liston  
Director of Impact Litigation  
Vanessa L. Kassab  
Deputy Attorney General  
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**/s/ Andrea Law**

Andrea Law  
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**/s/ Elizabeth Reardon**

Elizabeth Reardon  
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**/s/ Eric Proshansky**

Eric Proshansky  
Assistant Corporation Counsel  
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**/s/ Amor Rosario**

Amor Rosario  
Assistant Attorney General  
Heather Wilson  
Deputy Section Chief for  
Tobacco Enforcement  
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165 Capitol Avenue  
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**/s/ Chelsea N. Okamoto**

Chelsea N. Okamoto  
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Department of the Attorney General  
State of Hawaii  
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Honolulu, HI 96813

**/s/ Kara Burgess**

Kara Burgess  
Deputy Attorney General  
Office of Attorney General Todd Rokita  
IGCS 5th Floor  
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Indianapolis, IN 46204

**/s/ John M. Leovy**

John M. Leovy  
Division Chief  
Office of the Attorney General of Maryland  
200 Saint Paul Place  
Baltimore, MD 21202

**/s/ Alda Chan**

Alda Chan  
Assistant Attorney General  
Massachusetts Office of Attorney General  
One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108

**/s/ Lorin M. Taylor**

Lorin M. Taylor  
Senior Deputy Attorney General  
Office of the Nevada Attorney General  
1 State of Nevada Way, Ste. 100  
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**/s/ Jesse J. Sierant**

Jesse J. Sierant  
Deputy Attorney General/Section Chief  
State of New Jersey  
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Newark, NJ 07101

**/s/ Charles White**

Charles White  
Assistant Attorney General  
North Carolina Department of Justice  
114 W. Edenton Street  
Raleigh, NC 27603

**/s/ Adam D. Roach**

Adam D. Roach  
Special Assistant Attorney General  
Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General  
150 South Main Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**/s/ Michael R Bell**

Michael R Bell  
Assistant Attorney General  
Michigan Department of Attorney General  
2nd Flr, G. Mennen Williams Bldg  
525 West Ottawa St.  
P.O. Box 30754  
Lansing, MI 48909

**/s/Warren G. Cormack**

Warren G. Cormack  
Assistant Attorney General  
Office of the Attorney General of  
New Hampshire  
1 Granite Place South  
Concord, NH 03301

**/s/Anthony R. Juzaitis**

Anthony R. Juzaitis  
Assistant Attorney General  
Deputy Division Director  
New Mexico Department of Justice  
408 Galisteo Street  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

**/s/ Jackson Garcia**

Jackson Garcia  
Assistant Attorney General  
Office of the Attorney General of Oregon  
1162 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**/s/ John Sinclair**

John Sinclair  
Deputy Attorney General  
Tennessee Office of the Attorney General  
315 Deaderick Street  
Nashville, TN 37243  
P. O. Box 20207  
Nashville, TN 37202-0207

**/s/ Rosemary M. Kennedy**

Rosemary M. Kennedy  
Assistant Attorney General  
Vermont Office of the Attorney General  
109 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05609

**/s/ Gregory A. Myszkowski**

Gregory A. Myszkowski  
Assistant Attorney General  
State of Wisconsin Department of Justice  
17 West Main Street  
P.O. Box 7857  
Madison, WI 53707-7857

**/s/ S. Todd Sipe**

S. Todd Sipe  
Assistant Attorney General  
Washington State Attorney General's Office  
800 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000  
Seattle, WA 98104

**/s/ Zulma Carrasquillo Almena**

Zulma Carrasquillo Almena  
Senior Assistant Attorney  
Diana Jordán-González  
Assistant Attorney  
P.O. Box 7857  
Office of Monopolistic Affairs  
Department of Justice of Puerto Rico  
PO Box 9020192  
San Juan, PR 00902

# **EXHIBIT A**



STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

EXECUTIVE DIVISION

April 10, 2024

**Via First Class Mail & Email**

Rob Beard  
General Counsel  
Mastercard Inc.  
2000 Purchase Street  
Purchase, NY 10577  
rob.beard@mastercard.com

***Re: Illegal Transactions Concerning Vapor Products in New York***

Dear Mr. Beard:

I am writing to request that Mastercard Inc. and its affiliated companies (“Mastercard”) take appropriate steps to ensure that Mastercard does not facilitate violations of New York’s laws regarding sales of vapor products intended or reasonably expected to be used with or for the consumption of nicotine (“Vapor Products”), including Article 13F of the Public Health Law (“PHL”), or the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. § 375, *et seq.* In particular, and for the reasons set forth below, we are requesting that Mastercard contact its acquiring banks and instruct them not to process credit card transactions for online Vapor Product retailers, unless those retailers agree to comply with New York law and cease the direct shipment of Vapor Products to New York State consumers.

Vapor products pose serious consequences to public health. According to New York State Department of Health data, youth and young adults are the primary users of e-cigarettes, and e-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product by high school students in New York State.<sup>1</sup> Data from the 2022 New York Youth Tobacco Survey showed that 18.7% of high school youth use e-cigarettes.<sup>2</sup> Flavorings in tobacco products make them even more appealing to youth.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, in 2023, 90.3% of high school students and 87.1% of middle school students

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco\\_control/campaign/e-cigarettes/](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/campaign/e-cigarettes/)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco\\_control/reports/statshots/volume15/n1\\_youth\\_tobacco\\_use.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/reports/statshots/volume15/n1_youth_tobacco_use.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

who used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days reported using a flavored e-cigarette during that time.<sup>4</sup> According to the CDC, youth use of tobacco products in any form is unsafe.<sup>5</sup>

New York State has enacted laws to protect youth from the dangers of nicotine addiction by reducing access to tobacco and vaping products. As you probably are aware, PHL § 1399-ll prohibits the shipment of Vapor Product directly to New York State consumers. In particular, that section provides that no person engaged in the business of selling Vapor Products may “ship or cause to be shipped” any Vapor Products to any person in New York State, except for shipments to: (a) licensed tax agents, wholesaler dealers, and registered retail dealers; (b) export warehouse proprietors; and (c) government employees acting within the scope of their official duties. Additionally, PHL 1399-mm-1 provides that “No vapor products dealer, or any agent or employee of a vapor products dealer, shall sell or offer for sale at retail in the state any flavored vapor product intended or reasonably expected to be used with or for the consumption of nicotine.” Many online sellers, however, continue to sell Vapor Products directly to New York consumers, even though such shipments are clearly illegal. Moreover, the vast majority of these sales are accomplished through credit card purchases, including purchases using Mastercard credit cards. Your company should not be facilitating these illegal sales.

In addition to the above state law prohibitions, the PACT Act provides that any business that “sells, transfers, or ships...or who advertises or offers” ENDS for sale in interstate commerce is required to register with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (“ATF”) and with state and local tax authorities in each location that applies its own tax on ENDS, and into which shipments of ENDS are made, and to file monthly reports with state and local tobacco tax administrators documenting the types and quantities of products that were sold within each respective jurisdiction during the preceding month. When ENDS are distributed via delivery sale (e.g., when a consumer submits an order via telephone, the internet, or when the person is not otherwise in the physical presence of the seller), the delivery seller must comply with certain shipping requirements, recordkeeping requirements, and all laws generally applicable to sales of ENDS as if the delivery sale occurred entirely within the specific State and place of delivery, including but not limited to state laws imposing excise taxes, licensing requirements, restrictions on sales to underage individuals. 15 U.S.C. § 376a(a)(1)-(3). Thus, the PACT Act requires all delivery sellers of ENDS to consumers in New York to comply with all New York laws regulating vapor products, including its flavor ban and delivery ban.

Many online Vapor Product retailers appear to be violating the above laws. For example, the website <https://lousquare.com/pages/online-vape-shops-that-ship-to-ny> contains the following language: “Looking for online vape shops that ship to New York? Lou Square is your 24 hour vape store for all things vape, except there are actually no stops at all. You can shop our extensive range of products online, finding all your favorite brands and flavors in our collection.” Additionally, the website offers a wide array of flavored Vapor Products for sale such as Mango

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<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/youth\\_data/tobacco\\_use/](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/youth_data/tobacco_use/)



STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

EXECUTIVE DIVISION

Ice, Strawberry Kiwi, and Melon Ice, and many others. Indeed, one is able to purchase a flavored Vapor Product for delivery in New York using a Mastercard credit card.

For the reasons set forth above, it is clear that numerous online Vapor Products sellers: (a) are illegally selling flavored Vapor Products to consumers in New York in violation of PHL § 1399-mm-1; (b) are making shipments that constitute violations of PHL § 1399-ll; and are (c) engaging in delivery sales under 15 U.S.C. § 376a without meeting the requirements for such sales. In addition, where the sales are made to underage individuals these shipments constitute serious additional violations. Many websites make clear that they accept Mastercard credit cards for payment and we do not believe that your company should allow its acquiring banks to facilitate these illegal activities. Accordingly, we respectfully request that Mastercard contact its acquiring banks and instruct them not to process Mastercard credit card transactions for online Vapor Products sellers unless and until those retailers cease all shipments of Vapor Products to New York State consumers.

Thank you for your assistance, and please contact me at (212) 416-6323 or at [wil.handley@ag.ny.gov](mailto:wil.handley@ag.ny.gov) at your convenience, so that we can discuss what steps will be taken to address this issue.

Very truly yours,

s/ Wil Handley  
Wil Handley  
Assistant Attorney General  
Executive Division



ROB BONTA  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



DAVID W. SUNDAY, JR.  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



STEVEN BANKS  
CORPORATION COUNSEL

THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
LAW DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2026

**Via U.S. Mail and Email**

Brent McIntosh  
Chief Legal Officer & Corporate Secretary  
Citigroup Inc.  
388 Greenwich Street  
New York, NY 10013  
brent.mcintosh@citi.com

Re: Working to Stop Illegal E-cigarette Sales Transactions

Dear Mr. McIntosh:

We are writing on behalf of the States of **Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the City of New York** to express concerns about the widespread and ongoing illegal sales of electronic cigarettes and other vaping products (collectively, “e-cigarettes”) facilitated through the use of credit cards and payment processing services, including Citigroup Inc.’s (“Citigroup”) services. Over twenty years ago, the states similarly reached out to credit card companies to work collaboratively on solutions to reduce youth access to conventional cigarettes sold online.<sup>1</sup> We are reaching out again, but now concerning illegal sales of e-cigarettes and

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<sup>1</sup> See B. Tedeschi, Trouble for Online Vendors of Cigarettes, N.Y. Times (Apr. 4, 2005), available at <http://nytimes.com/2005/04/04/technology/trouble-for-online-vendors-of-cigarettes.html>;

requesting your assistance in addressing these illicit transactions online and at brick-and-mortar stores. Our outreach is grounded in the recognition that combating illegal e-cigarette sales requires proactive efforts between government entities and credit card and payment processing companies to stop these unlawful transactions.

By way of additional background, illegal sales of conventional cigarettes, particularly sales to youth, were prevalent in the early 2000s. Addressing this serious issue required not only robust government actions but also cooperation from the companies that enabled illegal transactions through their services such as credit card and payment processing. While important progress has been made since then to halt unlawful sales of tobacco products, particularly sales of conventional cigarettes to youth, significant work remains, largely caused by the popularity among youth of e-cigarettes that emerged in the United States market in the last fifteen years. E-cigarettes are highly addictive and pose significant health risks, particularly to youth.

Federal, state, and local governments across the nation have been working on accelerating policies and programs to reduce e-cigarette use among youth. On the federal regulatory level, every new tobacco product must receive an order from the federal Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) authorizing its marketing and sale in the United States. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 387j(a)(2)(A). To date, the FDA has authorized only 41 e-cigarette products, none in any flavor other than tobacco and menthol.<sup>2</sup> E-cigarettes that have not received authorization from the FDA, which constitute nearly all e-cigarettes offered by online sellers, are deemed “adulterated.” 21 U.S.C. § 387b(6)(A). Federal law prohibits the receipt or delivery in interstate commerce of any adulterated tobacco product, 21 U.S.C. § 331(c), and delivery or proffered delivery of adulterated tobacco products is accordingly unlawful under United States law. Of equal weight, the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act of 2009 (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. §§ 375–378 and 18 U.S.C. § 1716E, regulates online e-cigarette sales, imposing stringent requirements on online sellers that include use of age verification practices, labeling and weight requirements, and compliance with “*all* State, local, tribal, and other laws generally applicable to sales [of e-cigarettes]”. 15 U.S.C. §§ 376a, (a), (a)(3) (emphasis added). E-cigarette sellers are also subject to compliance with laws imposed by state and local governments such as, for example, age verification, licensing, and tax payment requirements. In addition, “flavor bans” have been enacted in jurisdictions such as California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New York, and New York City deeming the sale of a flavored e-cigarette in their jurisdictions a violation of state or local laws, and hence a violation of the PACT Act as well. Some states such as Connecticut, Oregon, Ohio, Maine, and Vermont completely ban online e-cigarette sales to consumers.

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<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2005/state-ag-and-atf-announce-initiative-credit-card-companies-prevent-illegal>.

<sup>2</sup> *See* U.S. Food & Drug Administration, “E-Cigarettes, ‘Vapes’ and Other Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) Authorized by the FDA,” (Apr. 1, 2026, at 11:50 ET), <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/market-and-distribute-tobacco-product/e-cigarettes-vapes-and-other-electronic-nicotine-delivery-systems-ends-authorized-fda>.

The pervasiveness of illegal e-cigarette sales and its consequent harm to public health necessitates a more comprehensive solution. The states and New York City have been working diligently to identify noncompliant sellers and have found that the vast majority of online merchants violate the PACT Act in virtually every regard. Independent studies of online merchants of vaping products report the same widespread noncompliance with the PACT Act requirements.<sup>3</sup> The states have been taking actions against illegal online sellers, including litigation and referrals of these sellers to the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (“ATF”) for inclusion on the Noncompliance List (“NCL”) established under the PACT Act, *see* 15 U.S.C. § 376a(e)(1). Recently, as part of our efforts to engage e-commerce platforms about the illegal activity enabled through their services, the states and New York City sent a letter to Shopify Inc. on November 24, 2025, highlighting the pervasive unlawful conduct by merchants selling e-cigarettes on its platform.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, our aim in this letter is to discuss the current scope of illegal e-cigarette trafficking and to work with you to halt the use of your services for unlawful transactions.

We request a meeting with Citigroup to discuss a comprehensive solution to address unlawful sales of vaping products regulated under federal, state, and local laws, with the goal of Citigroup prohibiting e-commerce service providers and merchants from using its services for unlawful purposes. Please provide a response outlining your availability within **15 days** of this letter. Citigroup’s response should be directed to Lesya Kinnamon at Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov, Edmund “Tad” Berger at eberger@attorneygeneral.gov, Leslieann Cachola at leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov, and Eric Proshansky at eproshan@law.nyc.gov.

Sincerely,

**/s/ Lesya N. Kinnamon**

Lesya N. Kinnamon  
Deputy Attorney General  
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**/s/ Edmund “Tad” Berger**

Edmund “Tad” Berger  
Chief Deputy Attorney General  
Tobacco Enforcement Section  
Office of Attorney General of Pennsylvania  
15th Floor, Strawberry Square  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

---

<sup>3</sup> See Harati RM, Ellis SE, Satybaldiyeva N, Mejorado T, Benitez G, Henriksen L, Leas EC. *Online Retailer Nonadherence to Age Verification, Shipping, and Flavor Restrictions on E-Cigarettes*. JAMA. 2024 Dec 24;332(24):2113-2114. doi: 10.1001/jama.2024.21597. PMID: 39527068; PMCID: PMC11555574.

<sup>4</sup> See Letter from various states to Shopify Inc. (Nov. 24, 2025), available at [https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA\\_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify\\_FINAL.pdf](https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify_FINAL.pdf).

**/s/ Leslieann E. Cachola**

Leslieann E. Cachola  
Deputy Bureau Chief  
New York State Office of the Attorney General  
28 Liberty Street  
New York, NY 10005

**/s/ Douglas Lau**

Douglas Lau  
Unit Chief – Tobacco Enforcement Unit  
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2005 N. Central Avenue  
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**/s/ Vanessa L. Kassab**

Ian R. Liston  
Director of Impact Litigation  
Vanessa L. Kassab  
Deputy Attorney General  
Delaware Department of Justice  
820 N. French Street  
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**/s/ Andrea Law**

Andrea Law  
Deputy Bureau Chief  
Office of the Illinois Attorney General  
115 South LaSalle Street  
Chicago, IL 60603

**/s/ Elizabeth Reardon**

Elizabeth Reardon  
Assistant Attorney General  
Office of the Maine Attorney General  
6 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

**/s/ Eric Proshansky**

Eric Proshansky  
Assistant Corporation Counsel  
New York City Law Department  
100 Church Street, Room 3-211  
New York, NY 10007

**/s/ Amor Rosario**

Amor Rosario  
Assistant Attorney General  
Heather Wilson  
Deputy Section Chief for  
Tobacco Enforcement  
Connecticut Office of the Attorney General  
165 Capitol Avenue  
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**/s/ Chelsea N. Okamoto**

Chelsea N. Okamoto  
Deputy Attorney General  
Department of the Attorney General  
State of Hawaii  
425 Queen Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

**/s/ Kara Burgess**

Kara Burgess  
Deputy Attorney General  
Office of Attorney General Todd Rokita  
IGCS 5th Floor  
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Indianapolis, IN 46204

**/s/ John M. Leovy**

John M. Leovy  
Division Chief  
Office of the Attorney General of Maryland  
200 Saint Paul Place  
Baltimore, MD 21202

**/s/ Alda Chan**

Alda Chan  
Assistant Attorney General  
Massachusetts Office of Attorney General  
One Ashburton Place  
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**/s/ Lorin M. Taylor**

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**/s/ Jesse J. Sierant**

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**/s/ Charles White**

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**/s/ Adam D. Roach**

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**/s/ Michael R Bell**

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**/s/Anthony R. Juzaitis**

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Deputy Division Director  
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**/s/ Jackson Garcia**

Jackson Garcia  
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**/s/ John Sinclair**

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**/s/ Rosemary M. Kennedy**

Rosemary M. Kennedy  
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**/s/ Gregory A. Myszkowski**

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Assistant Attorney General  
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**/s/ S. Todd Sipe**

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**/s/ Zulma Carrasquillo Almena**

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ROB BONTA  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



DAVID W. SUNDAY, JR.  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



STEVEN BANKS  
CORPORATION COUNSEL

THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
LAW DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2026

**Via U.S. Mail and Email**

Matthew Cooper  
General Counsel & Corporate Secretary  
Capital One Financial Corp  
1680 Capital One Drive  
McLean, VA 22102  
matt.cooper@capitalone.com

Re: Working to Stop Illegal E-cigarette Sales Transactions

Dear Mr. Cooper:

We are writing on behalf of the States of **Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the City of New York** to express concerns about the widespread and ongoing illegal sales of electronic cigarettes and other vaping products (collectively, “e-cigarettes”) facilitated through the use of credit cards and payment processing services, including Capital One Financial Corp’s (“Capital One”) services. Over twenty years ago, the states similarly reached out to credit card companies to work collaboratively on solutions to reduce youth access to conventional cigarettes sold online.<sup>1</sup> We are reaching out again, but now concerning illegal sales

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<sup>1</sup> See B. Tedeschi, Trouble for Online Vendors of Cigarettes, N.Y. Times (Apr. 4, 2005), available at <http://nytimes.com/2005/04/04/technology/trouble-for-online-vendors-of-cigarettes.html>;

of e-cigarettes and requesting your assistance in addressing these illicit transactions online and at brick-and-mortar stores. Our outreach is grounded in the recognition that combating illegal e-cigarette sales requires proactive efforts between government entities and credit card and payment processing companies to stop these unlawful transactions.

By way of additional background, illegal sales of conventional cigarettes, particularly sales to youth, were prevalent in the early 2000s. Addressing this serious issue required not only robust government actions but also cooperation from the companies that enabled illegal transactions through their services such as credit card and payment processing. While important progress has been made since then to halt unlawful sales of tobacco products, particularly sales of conventional cigarettes to youth, significant work remains, largely caused by the popularity among youth of e-cigarettes that emerged in the United States market in the last fifteen years. E-cigarettes are highly addictive and pose significant health risks, particularly to youth.

Federal, state, and local governments across the nation have been working on accelerating policies and programs to reduce e-cigarette use among youth. On the federal regulatory level, every new tobacco product must receive an order from the federal Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) authorizing its marketing and sale in the United States. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 387j(a)(2)(A). To date, the FDA has authorized only 41 e-cigarette products, none in any flavor other than tobacco and menthol.<sup>2</sup> E-cigarettes that have not received authorization from the FDA, which constitute nearly all e-cigarettes offered by online sellers, are deemed “adulterated.” 21 U.S.C. § 387b(6)(A). Federal law prohibits the receipt or delivery in interstate commerce of any adulterated tobacco product, 21 U.S.C. § 331(c), and delivery or proffered delivery of adulterated tobacco products is accordingly unlawful under United States law. Of equal weight, the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act of 2009 (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. §§ 375–378 and 18 U.S.C. § 1716E, regulates online e-cigarette sales, imposing stringent requirements on online sellers that include use of age verification practices, labeling and weight requirements, and compliance with “*all* State, local, tribal, and other laws generally applicable to sales [of e-cigarettes]”. 15 U.S.C. §§ 376a, (a), (a)(3) (emphasis added). E-cigarette sellers are also subject to compliance with laws imposed by state and local governments such as, for example, age verification, licensing, and tax payment requirements. In addition, “flavor bans” have been enacted in jurisdictions such as California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New York, and New York City deeming the sale of a flavored e-cigarette in their jurisdictions a violation of state or local laws, and hence a violation of the PACT Act as well. Some states such as Connecticut, Oregon, Ohio, Maine, and Vermont completely ban online e-cigarette sales to consumers.

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<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2005/state-ag-and-atf-announce-initiative-credit-card-companies-prevent-illegal>.

<sup>2</sup> *See* U.S. Food & Drug Administration, “E-Cigarettes, ‘Vapes’ and Other Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) Authorized by the FDA,” (Apr. 1, 2026, at 11:50 ET), <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/market-and-distribute-tobacco-product/e-cigarettes-vapes-and-other-electronic-nicotine-delivery-systems-ends-authorized-fda>.

The pervasiveness of illegal e-cigarette sales and its consequent harm to public health necessitates a more comprehensive solution. The states and New York City have been working diligently to identify noncompliant sellers and have found that the vast majority of online merchants violate the PACT Act in virtually every regard. Independent studies of online merchants of vaping products report the same widespread noncompliance with the PACT Act requirements.<sup>3</sup> The states have been taking actions against illegal online sellers, including litigation and referrals of these sellers to the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (“ATF”) for inclusion on the Noncompliance List (“NCL”) established under the PACT Act, *see* 15 U.S.C. § 376a(e)(1). New York previously identified these issues to Discover Financial Services, Inc., which is now a subsidiary of Capital One, in its April 10, 2024 letter. *See* Exhibit A. Recently, as part of our efforts to engage e-commerce platforms about the illegal activity enabled through their services, the states and New York City sent a letter to Shopify Inc. on November 24, 2025, highlighting the pervasive unlawful conduct by merchants selling e-cigarettes on its platform.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, our aim in this letter is to discuss the current scope of illegal e-cigarette trafficking and to work with you to halt the use of your services for unlawful transactions.

We request a meeting with Capital One to discuss a comprehensive solution to address unlawful sales of vaping products regulated under federal, state, and local laws, with the goal of Capital One prohibiting e-commerce service providers and merchants from using its services for unlawful purposes. Please provide a response outlining your availability within **15 days** of this letter. Capital One’s response should be directed to Lesya Kinnamon at [Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov](mailto:Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov), Edmund “Tad” Berger at [eberger@attorneygeneral.gov](mailto:eberger@attorneygeneral.gov), Leslieann Cachola at [leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov](mailto:leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov), and Eric Proshansky at [eproshan@law.nyc.gov](mailto:eproshan@law.nyc.gov).

Sincerely,

**/s/ Lesya N. Kinnamon**

Lesya N. Kinnamon  
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**/s/ Edmund “Tad” Berger**

Edmund “Tad” Berger  
Chief Deputy Attorney General  
Tobacco Enforcement Section  
Office of Attorney General of Pennsylvania  
15th Floor, Strawberry Square  
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---

<sup>3</sup> *See* Harati RM, Ellis SE, Satybaldiyeva N, Mejorado T, Benitez G, Henriksen L, Leas EC. *Online Retailer Nonadherence to Age Verification, Shipping, and Flavor Restrictions on E-Cigarettes*. JAMA. 2024 Dec 24;332(24):2113-2114. doi: 10.1001/jama.2024.21597. PMID: 39527068; PMCID: PMC11555574.

<sup>4</sup> *See* Letter from various states to Shopify Inc. (Nov. 24, 2025), available at [https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA\\_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify\\_FINAL.pdf](https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify_FINAL.pdf).

**/s/ Leslieann E. Cachola**

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**/s/ Douglas Lau**

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**/s/ Kara Burgess**

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**/s/ Charles White**

Charles White  
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**/s/ Adam D. Roach**

Adam D. Roach  
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**/s/ Michael R Bell**

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**/s/Warren G. Cormack**

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**/s/Anthony R. Juzaitis**

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**/s/ Jackson Garcia**

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**/s/ John Sinclair**

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Capital One Financial Corp

April 28, 2026

Page 6

**/s/ Rosemary M. Kennedy**

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**/s/ Gregory A. Myszkowski**

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**/s/ S. Todd Sipe**

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**/s/ Zulma Carrasquillo Almena**

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# **EXHIBIT A**



STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

EXECUTIVE DIVISION

April 10, 2024

**Via First Class Mail & Email**

Hope Mehlman  
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Discover Financial Services  
2500 Lake Cook Road  
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[HopeMehlman@discover.com](mailto:HopeMehlman@discover.com)

***Re: Illegal Transactions Concerning Vapor Products in New York***

Dear Ms. Mehlman:

I am writing to request that Discover Financial Services and its affiliated companies (“Discover”) take appropriate steps to ensure that Discover does not facilitate violations of New York’s laws regarding sales of vapor products intended or reasonably expected to be used with or for the consumption of nicotine (“Vapor Products”), including Article 13F of the Public Health Law (“PHL”), or the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. § 375, *et seq.* In particular, and for the reasons set forth below, we are requesting that Discover contact its acquiring banks and instruct them not to process credit card transactions for online Vapor Product retailers, unless those retailers agree to comply with New York law and cease the direct shipment of Vapor Products to New York State consumers.

Vapor products pose serious consequences to public health. According to New York State Department of Health data, youth and young adults are the primary users of e-cigarettes, and e-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product by high school students in New York State.<sup>1</sup> Data from the 2022 New York Youth Tobacco Survey showed that 18.7% of high school youth use e-cigarettes.<sup>2</sup> Flavorings in tobacco products make them even more appealing to youth.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, in 2023, 90.3% of high school students and 87.1% of middle school students

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco\\_control/campaign/e-cigarettes/](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/campaign/e-cigarettes/)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco\\_control/reports/statshots/volume15/n1\\_youth\\_tobacco\\_use.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/reports/statshots/volume15/n1_youth_tobacco_use.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> *See id.*

who used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days reported using a flavored e-cigarette during that time.<sup>4</sup> According to the CDC, youth use of tobacco products in any form is unsafe.<sup>5</sup>

New York State has enacted laws to protect youth from the dangers of nicotine addiction by reducing access to tobacco and vaping products. As you probably are aware, PHL § 1399-ll prohibits the shipment of Vapor Product directly to New York State consumers. In particular, that section provides that no person engaged in the business of selling Vapor Products may “ship or cause to be shipped” any Vapor Products to any person in New York State, except for shipments to: (a) licensed tax agents, wholesaler dealers, and registered retail dealers; (b) export warehouse proprietors; and (c) government employees acting within the scope of their official duties. Additionally, PHL § 1399-mm-1 provides that “No vapor products dealer, or any agent or employee of a vapor products dealer, shall sell or offer for sale at retail in the state any flavored vapor product intended or reasonably expected to be used with or for the consumption of nicotine.” Many online sellers, however, continue to sell Vapor Products directly to New York consumers, even though such shipments are clearly illegal. Moreover, the vast majority of these sales are accomplished through credit card purchases, including purchases using Discover credit cards. Your company should not be facilitating these illegal sales.

In addition to the above state law prohibitions, the PACT Act provides that any business that “sells, transfers, or ships...or who advertises or offers” ENDS for sale in interstate commerce is required to register with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (“ATF”) and with state and local tax authorities in each location that applies its own tax on ENDS, and into which shipments of ENDS are made, and to file monthly reports with state and local tobacco tax administrators documenting the types and quantities of products that were sold within each respective jurisdiction during the preceding month. When ENDS are distributed via delivery sale (e.g., when a consumer submits an order via telephone, the internet, or when the person is not otherwise in the physical presence of the seller), the delivery seller must comply with certain shipping requirements, recordkeeping requirements, and all laws generally applicable to sales of ENDS as if the delivery sale occurred entirely within the specific State and place of delivery, including but not limited to state laws imposing excise taxes, licensing requirements, restrictions on sales to underage individuals. 15 U.S.C. § 376a(a)(1)-(3). Thus, the PACT Act requires all delivery sellers of ENDS to consumers in New York to comply with all New York laws regulating vapor products, including its flavor ban and delivery ban.

Many online Vapor Product retailers appear to be violating the above laws. For example, the website, <https://lousquare.com/pages/online-vape-shops-that-ship-to-ny>, contains the following language: “Looking for online vape shops that ship to New York? Lou Square is your 24 hour vape store for all things vape, except there are actually no stops at all. You can shop our extensive range of products online, finding all your favorite brands and flavors in our collection.” Additionally, the website offers a wide array of flavored Vapor Products for sale such as Mango

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<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/youth\\_data/tobacco\\_use/](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/youth_data/tobacco_use/)



STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

EXECUTIVE DIVISION

Ice, Strawberry Kiwi, and Melon Ice, and many others. Indeed, one is able to purchase a flavored Vapor Product for delivery in New York using a Discover credit card.

For the reasons set forth above, it is clear that numerous online Vapor Products sellers: (a) are illegally selling flavored Vapor Products to consumers in New York in violation of PHL § 1399-mm-1; (b) are making shipments that constitute violations of PHL § 1399-ll; and are (c) engaging in delivery sales under 15 U.S.C. § 376a without meeting the requirements for such sales. In addition, where the sales are made to underage individuals these shipments constitute serious additional violations. Many websites make clear that they accept Discover credit cards for payment, and we do not believe that your company should allow its acquiring banks to facilitate these illegal activities. Accordingly, we respectfully request that Discover contact its acquiring banks and instruct them not to process Discover credit card transactions for online Vapor Products sellers unless and until those retailers cease all shipments of Vapor Products to New York State consumers.

Thank you for your assistance, and please contact me at (212) 416-6323 or at [wil.handley@ag.ny.gov](mailto:wil.handley@ag.ny.gov) at your convenience, so that we can discuss what steps will be taken to address this issue.

Very truly yours,

s/ Wil Handley  
Wil Handley  
Assistant Attorney General  
Executive Division



ROB BONTA  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



DAVID W. SUNDAY, JR.  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



STEVEN BANKS  
CORPORATION COUNSEL

THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
LAW DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2026

**Via U.S. Mail and Email**

Chrysty Esperanza  
Chief Legal Officer & Corporate Secretary  
Block, Inc.  
1955 Broadway, Suite 600  
Oakland, CA 946121  
chrysty@block.xyz

Re: Working to Stop Illegal E-cigarette Sales Transactions

Dear Ms. Esperanza:

We are writing on behalf of the States of **Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the City of New York** to express concerns about the widespread and ongoing illegal sales of electronic cigarettes and other vaping products (collectively, “e-cigarettes”) facilitated through the use of credit cards and payment processing services, including Block, Inc.’s (“Block”) services. Over twenty years ago, the states similarly reached out to credit card companies to work collaboratively on solutions to reduce youth access to conventional cigarettes sold online.<sup>1</sup> We are reaching out again, but now concerning illegal sales of e-cigarettes and

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<sup>1</sup> See B. Tedeschi, Trouble for Online Vendors of Cigarettes, N.Y. Times (Apr. 4, 2005), available at <http://nytimes.com/2005/04/04/technology/trouble-for-online-vendors-of-cigarettes.html>;

requesting your assistance in addressing these illicit transactions online and at brick-and-mortar stores. Our outreach is grounded in the recognition that combating illegal e-cigarette sales requires proactive efforts between government entities and credit card and payment processing companies to stop these unlawful transactions.

By way of additional background, illegal sales of conventional cigarettes, particularly sales to youth, were prevalent in the early 2000s. Addressing this serious issue required not only robust government actions but also cooperation from the companies that enabled illegal transactions through their services such as credit card and payment processing. While important progress has been made since then to halt unlawful sales of tobacco products, particularly sales of conventional cigarettes to youth, significant work remains, largely caused by the popularity among youth of e-cigarettes that emerged in the United States market in the last fifteen years. E-cigarettes are highly addictive and pose significant health risks, particularly to youth.

Federal, state, and local governments across the nation have been working on accelerating policies and programs to reduce e-cigarette use among youth. On the federal regulatory level, every new tobacco product must receive an order from the federal Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) authorizing its marketing and sale in the United States. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 387j(a)(2)(A). To date, the FDA has authorized only 41 e-cigarette products, none in any flavor other than tobacco and menthol.<sup>2</sup> E-cigarettes that have not received authorization from the FDA, which constitute nearly all e-cigarettes offered by online sellers, are deemed “adulterated.” 21 U.S.C. § 387b(6)(A). Federal law prohibits the receipt or delivery in interstate commerce of any adulterated tobacco product, 21 U.S.C. § 331(c), and delivery or proffered delivery of adulterated tobacco products is accordingly unlawful under United States law. Of equal weight, the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act of 2009 (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. §§ 375–378 and 18 U.S.C. § 1716E, regulates online e-cigarette sales, imposing stringent requirements on online sellers that include use of age verification practices, labeling and weight requirements, and compliance with “*all* State, local, tribal, and other laws generally applicable to sales [of e-cigarettes]”. 15 U.S.C. §§ 376a, (a), (a)(3) (emphasis added). E-cigarette sellers are also subject to compliance with laws imposed by state and local governments such as, for example, age verification, licensing, and tax payment requirements. In addition, “flavor bans” have been enacted in jurisdictions such as California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New York, and New York City deeming the sale of a flavored e-cigarette in their jurisdictions a violation of state or local laws, and hence a violation of the PACT Act as well. Some states such as Connecticut, Oregon, Ohio, Maine, and Vermont completely ban online e-cigarette sales to consumers.

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<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2005/state-ag-and-atf-announce-initiative-credit-card-companies-prevent-illegal>.

<sup>2</sup> *See* U.S. Food & Drug Administration, “E-Cigarettes, ‘Vapes’ and Other Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) Authorized by the FDA,” (Apr. 1, 2026, at 11:50 ET), <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/market-and-distribute-tobacco-product/e-cigarettes-vapes-and-other-electronic-nicotine-delivery-systems-ends-authorized-fda>.

The pervasiveness of illegal e-cigarette sales and its consequent harm to public health necessitates a more comprehensive solution. The states and New York City have been working diligently to identify noncompliant sellers and have found that the vast majority of online merchants violate the PACT Act in virtually every regard. Independent studies of online merchants of vaping products report the same widespread noncompliance with the PACT Act requirements.<sup>3</sup> The states have been taking actions against illegal online sellers, including litigation and referrals of these sellers to the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (“ATF”) for inclusion on the Noncompliance List (“NCL”) established under the PACT Act, *see* 15 U.S.C. § 376a(e)(1). Recently, as part of our efforts to engage e-commerce platforms about the illegal activity enabled through their services, the states and New York City sent a letter to Shopify Inc. on November 24, 2025, highlighting the pervasive unlawful conduct by merchants selling e-cigarettes on its platform.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, our aim in this letter is to discuss the current scope of illegal e-cigarette trafficking and to work with you to halt the use of your services for unlawful transactions.

We request a meeting with Block to discuss a comprehensive solution to address unlawful sales of vaping products regulated under federal, state, and local laws, with the goal of Block prohibiting e-commerce service providers and merchants from using its services for unlawful purposes. Please provide a response outlining your availability within **15 days** of this letter. Block’s response should be directed to Lesya Kinnamon at [Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov](mailto:Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov), Edmund “Tad” Berger at [eberger@attorneygeneral.gov](mailto:eberger@attorneygeneral.gov), Leslieann Cachola at [leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov](mailto:leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov), and Eric Proshansky at [eproshan@law.nyc.gov](mailto:eproshan@law.nyc.gov).

Sincerely,

**/s/ Lesya N. Kinnamon**

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<sup>3</sup> *See* Harati RM, Ellis SE, Satybaldiyeva N, Mejorado T, Benitez G, Henriksen L, Leas EC. *Online Retailer Nonadherence to Age Verification, Shipping, and Flavor Restrictions on E-Cigarettes*. JAMA. 2024 Dec 24;332(24):2113-2114. doi: 10.1001/jama.2024.21597. PMID: 39527068; PMCID: PMC11555574.

<sup>4</sup> *See* Letter from various states to Shopify Inc. (Nov. 24, 2025), available at [https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA\\_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify\\_FINAL.pdf](https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify_FINAL.pdf).

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LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



STEVEN BANKS  
CORPORATION COUNSEL

THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
LAW DEPARTMENT

April 28, 2026

**Via U.S. Mail and Email**

Laureen Seeger  
Chief Legal Officer  
American Express Company  
200 Vesey Street  
New York, NY 10285  
laureen.e.seeger@aexp.com

Re: Working to Stop Illegal E-cigarette Sales Transactions

Dear Ms. Seeger:

We are writing on behalf of the States of **Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the City of New York** to express concerns about the widespread and ongoing illegal sales of electronic cigarettes and other vaping products (collectively, “e-cigarettes”) facilitated through the use of credit cards and payment processing services, including American Express Company’s (“Amex”) services. Over twenty years ago, the states similarly reached out to credit card companies to work collaboratively on solutions to reduce youth access to conventional cigarettes sold online.<sup>1</sup> We are reaching out again, but now concerning illegal sales of e-

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<sup>1</sup> See B. Tedeschi, Trouble for Online Vendors of Cigarettes, N.Y. Times (Apr. 4, 2005), available at <http://nytimes.com/2005/04/04/technology/trouble-for-online-vendors-of-cigarettes.html>;

cigarettes and requesting your assistance in addressing these illicit transactions online and at brick-and-mortar stores. Our outreach is grounded in the recognition that combating illegal e-cigarette sales requires proactive efforts between government entities and credit card and payment processing companies to stop these unlawful transactions.

By way of additional background, illegal sales of conventional cigarettes, particularly sales to youth, were prevalent in the early 2000s. Addressing this serious issue required not only robust government actions but also cooperation from the companies that enabled illegal transactions through their services such as credit card and payment processing. While important progress has been made since then to halt unlawful sales of tobacco products, particularly sales of conventional cigarettes to youth, significant work remains, largely caused by the popularity among youth of e-cigarettes that emerged in the United States market in the last fifteen years. E-cigarettes are highly addictive and pose significant health risks, particularly to youth.

Federal, state, and local governments across the nation have been working on accelerating policies and programs to reduce e-cigarette use among youth. On the federal regulatory level, every new tobacco product must receive an order from the federal Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) authorizing its marketing and sale in the United States. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 387j(a)(2)(A). To date, the FDA has authorized only 41 e-cigarette products, none in any flavor other than tobacco and menthol.<sup>2</sup> E-cigarettes that have not received authorization from the FDA, which constitute nearly all e-cigarettes offered by online sellers, are deemed “adulterated.” 21 U.S.C. § 387b(6)(A). Federal law prohibits the receipt or delivery in interstate commerce of any adulterated tobacco product, 21 U.S.C. § 331(c), and delivery or proffered delivery of adulterated tobacco products is accordingly unlawful under United States law. Of equal weight, the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act of 2009 (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. §§ 375–378 and 18 U.S.C. § 1716E, regulates online e-cigarette sales, imposing stringent requirements on online sellers that include use of age verification practices, labeling and weight requirements, and compliance with “*all* State, local, tribal, and other laws generally applicable to sales [of e-cigarettes]”. 15 U.S.C. §§ 376a, (a), (a)(3) (emphasis added). E-cigarette sellers are also subject to compliance with laws imposed by state and local governments such as, for example, age verification, licensing, and tax payment requirements. In addition, “flavor bans” have been enacted in jurisdictions such as California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New York, and New York City deeming the sale of a flavored e-cigarette in their jurisdictions a violation of state or local laws, and hence a violation of the PACT Act as well. Some states such as Connecticut, Oregon, Ohio, Maine, and Vermont completely ban online e-cigarette sales to consumers.

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<https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2005/state-ags-and-atf-announce-initiative-credit-card-companies-prevent-illegal>.

<sup>2</sup> *See* U.S. Food & Drug Administration, “E-Cigarettes, ‘Vapes’ and Other Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) Authorized by the FDA,” (Apr. 1, 2026, at 11:50 ET), <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/market-and-distribute-tobacco-product/e-cigarettes-vapes-and-other-electronic-nicotine-delivery-systems-ends-authorized-fda>.

The pervasiveness of illegal e-cigarette sales and its consequent harm to public health necessitates a more comprehensive solution. The states and New York City have been working diligently to identify noncompliant sellers and have found that the vast majority of online merchants violate the PACT Act in virtually every regard. Independent studies of online merchants of vaping products report the same widespread noncompliance with the PACT Act requirements.<sup>3</sup> The states have been taking actions against illegal online sellers, including litigation and referrals of these sellers to the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (“ATF”) for inclusion on the Noncompliance List (“NCL”) established under the PACT Act, *see* 15 U.S.C. § 376a(e)(1). New York previously identified these issues to Amex in its April 10, 2024 letter. *See* Exhibit A. Recently, as part of our efforts to engage e-commerce platforms about the illegal activity enabled through their services, the states and New York City sent a letter to Shopify Inc. on November 24, 2025, highlighting the pervasive unlawful conduct by merchants selling e-cigarettes on its platform.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, our aim in this letter is to discuss the current scope of illegal e-cigarette trafficking and to work with you to halt the use of your services for unlawful transactions.

We request a meeting with Amex to discuss a comprehensive solution to address unlawful sales of vaping products regulated under federal, state, and local laws, with the goal of Amex prohibiting e-commerce service providers and merchants from using its services for unlawful purposes. Please provide a response outlining your availability within **15 days** of this letter. Amex’s response should be directed to Lesya Kinnamon at [Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov](mailto:Lesya.Kinnamon@doj.ca.gov), Edmund “Tad” Berger at [eberger@attorneygeneral.gov](mailto:eberger@attorneygeneral.gov), Leslieann Cachola at [leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov](mailto:leslieann.cachola@ag.ny.gov), and Eric Proshansky at [eproshan@law.nyc.gov](mailto:eproshan@law.nyc.gov).

Sincerely,

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**/s/ Edmund “Tad” Berger**

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<sup>3</sup> *See* Harati RM, Ellis SE, Satybaldiyeva N, Mejorado T, Benitez G, Henriksen L, Leas EC. *Online Retailer Nonadherence to Age Verification, Shipping, and Flavor Restrictions on E-Cigarettes*. JAMA. 2024 Dec 24;332(24):2113-2114. doi: 10.1001/jama.2024.21597. PMID: 39527068; PMCID: PMC11555574.

<sup>4</sup> *See* Letter from various states to Shopify Inc. (Nov. 24, 2025), available at [https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA\\_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify\\_FINAL.pdf](https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press-docs/CA_NYC%20Letter%20to%20Shopify_FINAL.pdf).

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April 28, 2026

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April 28, 2026

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# **EXHIBIT A**



STATE OF NEW YORK  
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LETITIA JAMES  
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EXECUTIVE DIVISION

April 10, 2024

**Via First Class Mail & Email**

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***Re: Illegal Transactions Concerning Vapor Products in New York***

Dear Ms. Seeger:

I am writing to request that American Express Company and its affiliated companies (“Amex”) take appropriate steps to ensure that Amex does not facilitate violations of New York’s laws regarding sales of vapor products intended or reasonably expected to be used with or for the consumption of nicotine (“Vapor Products”), including Article 13F of the Public Health Law (“PHL”), or the federal Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act (“PACT Act”), 15 U.S.C. § 375, *et seq.* In particular, and for the reasons set forth below, we are requesting that Amex contact its acquiring banks and instruct them not to process credit card transactions for online Vapor Product retailers, unless those retailers agree to comply with New York law and cease the direct shipment of Vapor Products to New York State consumers.

Vapor products pose serious consequences to public health. According to New York State Department of Health data, youth and young adults are the primary users of e-cigarettes, and e-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product by high school students in New York State.<sup>1</sup> Data from the 2022 New York Youth Tobacco Survey showed that 18.7% of high school youth use e-cigarettes.<sup>2</sup> Flavorings in tobacco products make them even more appealing to youth.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, in 2023, 90.3% of high school students and 87.1% of middle school students

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco\\_control/campaign/e-cigarettes/](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/campaign/e-cigarettes/)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco\\_control/reports/statshots/volume15/n1\\_youth\\_tobacco\\_use.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/reports/statshots/volume15/n1_youth_tobacco_use.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> *See id.*

who used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days reported using a flavored e-cigarette during that time.<sup>4</sup> According to the CDC, youth use of tobacco products in any form is unsafe.<sup>5</sup>

New York State has enacted laws to protect youth from the dangers of nicotine addiction by reducing access to tobacco and vaping products. As you probably are aware, PHL § 1399-ll prohibits the shipment of Vapor Product directly to New York State consumers. In particular, that section provides that no person engaged in the business of selling Vapor Products may “ship or cause to be shipped” any Vapor Products to any person in New York State, except for shipments to: (a) licensed tax agents, wholesaler dealers, and registered retail dealers; (b) export warehouse proprietors; and (c) government employees acting within the scope of their official duties. Additionally, PHL § 1399-mm-1 provides that “No vapor products dealer, or any agent or employee of a vapor products dealer, shall sell or offer for sale at retail in the state any flavored vapor product intended or reasonably expected to be used with or for the consumption of nicotine.” Many online sellers, however, continue to sell Vapor Products directly to New York consumers, even though such shipments are clearly illegal. Moreover, the vast majority of these sales are accomplished through credit card purchases, including purchases using Amex credit cards. Your company should not be facilitating these illegal sales.

In addition to the above state law prohibitions, the PACT Act provides that any business that “sells, transfers, or ships...or who advertises or offers” ENDS for sale in interstate commerce is required to register with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (“ATF”) and with state and local tax authorities in each location that applies its own tax on ENDS, and into which shipments of ENDS are made, and to file monthly reports with state and local tobacco tax administrators documenting the types and quantities of products that were sold within each respective jurisdiction during the preceding month. When ENDS are distributed via delivery sale (e.g., when a consumer submits an order via telephone, the internet, or when the person is not otherwise in the physical presence of the seller), the delivery seller must comply with certain shipping requirements, recordkeeping requirements, and all laws generally applicable to sales of ENDS as if the delivery sale occurred entirely within the specific State and place of delivery, including but not limited to state laws imposing excise taxes, licensing requirements, and restrictions on sales to underage individuals. 15 U.S.C. § 376a(a)(1)-(3). Thus, the PACT Act requires all delivery sellers of ENDS to consumers in New York to comply with all New York laws regulating vapor products, including its flavor ban and delivery ban.

Many online Vapor Product retailers appear to be violating the above laws. For example, the website, <https://lousquare.com/pages/online-vape-shops-that-ship-to-ny>, contains the following language: “Looking for online vape shops that ship to New York? Lou Square is your 24 hour vape store for all things vape, except there are actually no stops at all. You can shop our extensive range of products online, finding all your favorite brands and flavors in our collection.” Additionally, the website offers a wide array of flavored Vapor Products for sale such as Mango

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<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/youth\\_data/tobacco\\_use/](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/youth_data/tobacco_use/)



STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

EXECUTIVE DIVISION

Ice, Strawberry Kiwi, and Melon Ice, and many others. Indeed, one is able to purchase a flavored Vapor Product for delivery in New York using an Amex credit card.

For the reasons set forth above, it is clear that numerous online Vapor Products sellers: (a) are illegally selling flavored Vapor Products to consumers in New York in violation of PHL § 1399-mm-1; (b) are making shipments that constitute violations of PHL § 1399-ll; and are (c) engaging in delivery sales under 15 U.S.C. § 376a without meeting the requirements for such sales. In addition, where the sales are made to underage individuals these shipments constitute serious additional violations. Many websites make clear that they accept Amex credit cards for payment, and we do not believe that your company should allow its acquiring banks to facilitate these illegal activities. Accordingly, we respectfully request that Amex contact its acquiring banks and instruct them not to process Amex credit card transactions for online Vapor Products sellers unless and until those retailers cease all shipments of Vapor Products to New York State consumers.

Thank you for your assistance, and please contact me at (212) 416-6323 or at [wil.handley@ag.ny.gov](mailto:wil.handley@ag.ny.gov) at your convenience, so that we can discuss what steps will be taken to address this issue.

Very truly yours,

/s Wil Handley  
Wil Handley  
Assistant Attorney General  
Executive Division