Hello, my name is Melissa Mudd and I’ve lived in Alaska 33 years.  I’ve been a resident of the city of Palmer since 1983.

I am writing in support of House Bill 40, which would add electronic nicotine delivery systems to Alaska's current smoke-free law.

In the past two years, I’ve been dismayed to see how many teens have begun using e-cigarettes and vape pens. Previously non-smokers, students in middle and high school have begun experimenting with these new products because they are clever little gadgets and come in great flavors. To just try out e-cigarettes is the way it starts out, but soon after the nicotine addiction develops, and dual use begins.

I believe when it comes to e-cigarettes and vaping, we should be cautious on behalf of ourselves and our children's safety. I have no objection to people using untested, unregulated devices for harm reduction or for quit attempts, but I do object to being exposed to the hazardous carcinogenic components in the aerosol they emit.

The increasing popularity of electronic smoking devices, combined with loopholes in existing tobacco control laws, threatens to renormalize tobacco use.

Further, the concerns regarding vaping of marijuana in public places would be alleviated by adding all electronic devices to the law.  Owners, workers and customers would never have to ask what the e-cigarettes contained, nor wonder what a person is inhaling and breathing out in a public space.

By supporting House Bill 40, you can help protect Alaskans from being exposed to the contents of these devices without their knowledge and without their consent.