

In Defense Of Smoke-Free Tobacco

The Washington Post

August 5, 2025

Leana S. Wen's July 24 newsletter asked: "[Do nicotine pouches have a public health benefit? It's complicated.](#)" No, it's not.

The growth in popularity of smoke-free products is helping to accelerate the end of cigarette smoking in the United States. Over the past 12 years alone, the percentage of legal-age adult cigarette smokers in the United States has declined to an [80-year low](#).

ZYN nicotine pouches were developed as a better alternative for legal-age adult smokers who would otherwise continue using combustible cigarettes, the most harmful form of consuming nicotine. This is no "ploy," as Wen alleged, to hook a new generation. In fact, PMI was the first major tobacco company to commit to ending cigarette sales and remains the only company in the industry to back this commitment with clear, decisive actions. Smoke-free products now account for nearly half of our total net revenue globally.

ZYN is not a quit-aid, and medical authorization was not sought for that use. It's simply a [better alternative](#) for legal-age adults who choose to continue consuming nicotine. Additionally, Wen overlooked that dual use is often a transitional phase on the way to abandoning smoking completely. The Food and Drug Administration's review [found](#) that nearly one-quarter of dual users in a recent study switched completely to ZYN within only 10 weeks. That's progress.

Wen also referenced a controversial meta-analysis suggesting dual users may face higher health risks. But it has been [widely criticized](#) by leading tobacco control experts for misinterpreting the evidence. The FDA, by contrast, has consistently [stated](#) that non-combusted products such as nicotine pouches pose lower health risks than cigarettes.

A smoke-free future is within reach. But we won't get there by demonizing alternatives.

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