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I am vaccinated and wore a mask during the pandemic. Yet, I never believed that government should have the power to force people to be vaccinated, businesses to close, or schools to shut down. Most Americans agree that the government flexed way too much power during the pandemic.

The power of the government to mandate is merely one piece of evidence that the government is getting too powerful. Another is the out-of-control spending Americans are seeing from their government. The federal government is careening toward insolvency with more than \$30 trillion in debt and annual deficits exceeding \$1 trillion. Americans are angry that they must balance their family checkbook while the federal government runs massive deficits. The same government that used the power to enforce mandates is also spending our nation into oblivion.

Some in Washington are wasting time focusing on expanding government power in a way that does not address the top 20, maybe the top 100, list of issues of importance to the voting public. The increasing prices of food and consumer goods, government debt, cost of housing, stability of banks, jobs, excessive government power, and the economy are far more important than vaping. Yet, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer is using resources to demand a government agency investigate one vaping company. Government power is being flexed because Schumer does not like the company selling vaping products in his state. This is bad policy.

He has reopened his war on vaping with a demand that regulators stop a company from using third-party influencers on social media sites from helping to educate vaping users about the existence of its product. The New York Post reports that Schumer has targeted the vaping product “Elf Bar” for extinction, and he has demanded the “US Food and Drug Administration to investigate a hot, new Chinese-made e-cigarette that he believes is skirting American advertising laws by appealing directly to kids and teenager via social media.”

He politicizes his message when he argues that the company markets “kid-friendly flavors.” The truth is that he wants to use the massive power of the federal government to get rid of a product he does not like.

Ironically, vaping products are commonly seen as a tool to get people off smoking cigarettes, and banning them will leave more Americans addicted. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that while the “tobacco industry spends billions of dollars each year on marketing cigarettes,” it is also true that “each day, about 1,600 youth try their first cigarette.” Federal regulators might want to focus on tobacco cigarettes rather than adults who want to vape as a substitute for traditional smoking.

If this war on vaping had anything to do with kids’ health, a consistent Schumer would not be pushing for decriminalization on the federal level of marijuana products that sell flavored products. He is a co-sponsor of the bill, the Cannabis Administration and Opportunity Act, that removes marijuana from the list of controlled substances.

I support removing cannabis from the list, yet I recognize that some states allow the marketing of flavored products that appeal to adults. It is not unique for companies to advertise flavored CBD and THC gummies and Chocolate edibles. The argument that flavored vaping must be banned to protect kids from harm is not credible in this case.

It is a bad policy for the Food and Drug Administration to impose more big-government policies on the American people. Schumer and others who support this flawed policy should stand down.

ABOUT THE WRITER

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