

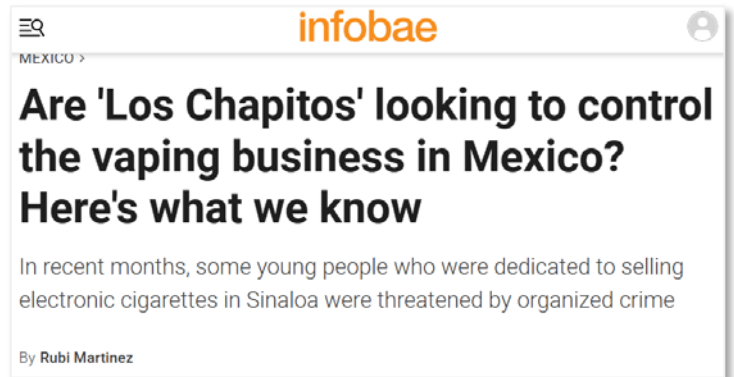
# Cartels and The Chinese E-vapor Connection

**Mexican Cartels are partnering with Chinese e-vapor manufactures to profit from the sale of illegal vaping products.**

There is a long-reported link between cigarette and tobacco product trafficking and Mexican Cartels. For example, since at least 2018, **The Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG)**, a cartel sanctioned by the United States for its role in trafficking narcotics and fentanyl into the U.S., has profited from tobacco product trafficking.<sup>1</sup>

Recently, Mexican Cartels, including the **Sinaloa Cartel**, have expanded into e-vapor. It is reported that the “Los Chapitos” faction of the Sinaloa Cartel is moving to take over the e-vapor business throughout Mexico.<sup>2</sup>

*The Sinaloa Cartel has expanded beyond just profiting from the e-vapor black market. Now they have reportedly **contracted directly with at least one Chinese e-vapor manufacturer** to profit from all e-vapor sales in the geographies they control.*



*Milenio*, a major Mexico national newspaper, reports that the Sinaloa Cartel has capitalized on the longstanding national ban on e-vapor products in a new and unprecedented way – **by contracting production directly with a Chinese manufacturer and controlling sales through brutal and deadly force.**<sup>3</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Senators Cassidy, Rubio, Cotton, Scott, and Hagerty letter to Janet Yellen, Secretary of U.S. Department of the Treasury, 5/10/23, <https://www.cassidy.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/cassidy-rubio-colleagues-urge-biden-to-sanction-international-tobacco-company-with-ties-to-mexican-drug-cartels/>

<sup>2</sup> Infobae, Are 'Los Chapitos' looking to control the vaping business in Mexico? Here's what we know <https://www.infobae.com/mexico/2024/02/15/los-chapitos-buscan-controlar-el-negocio-de-vapeadores-en-mexico-esto-es-lo-que-sabemos/>

<sup>3</sup> Milenio, Sinaloa Cartel Linked To The Sale of Vapes; Merchants Report Threats (English translation) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=C8c7JfH7SBA>

Cartels including the Chapitos, the Cártel de Jalisco Nueva Generación (CJNG) and Unión Tepito have profited from the e-vapor black market for years, **however, the Sinaloa Cartel appears to be the first to contract directly with a Chinese manufacturer: iJOY (Shenzhen iJOY Technology Co., LTD.).**<sup>4</sup>



*“...The vape that the cartel distributes for sale on the streets is the **iJOY BAR IC8000** device made in China... **What the cartel did was hire a company to mass produce it for the Cartel and put the Mexican flag on it, and it says ‘Made for Mexico.’** That way they can identify that you buy exactly what the cartel is selling you.”*

The Sinaloa Cartel, in addition to reportedly contracting directly with iJOY, **forces tobacco stores in the areas they control to sell these illicit products, or face terrible consequences** – including store firebombing, physical harm, or even death.

Further, as reported by The Washington Reporter and the Latin Times, “...‘vapes are becoming an increasingly significant part of Mexican cartels’ business portfolios’ with cartels ‘mandating business owners’ in Mexico to sell Chinese vapes called iJoy Bar....iJoy vapes aren’t only available in Mexico, but are being [distributed and sold](#) across the United States in flavors such as ‘Tropical Rainbow Blast.’ In fact, [recent law enforcement activity](#) against major distributors Demand Vape, Safa Goods and Midwest Goods for selling illicit vapes (such as iJoy) has shed new light on the Chinese illicit vape distribution network in the United States that seems to mirror those of the cartel distribution networks in Mexico.”<sup>5</sup>

WASHINGTON REPORTER

### K-STREET, 10,000 FEET: Inside the illicit vaping crisis: How China and Mexico’s cartels are poisoning America

THE WASHINGTON REPORTER  
FEB 20, 2025

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**THE LOWDOWN:**

- **Illicit Chinese vapes and fentanyl are flooding into American communities, including schools, via networks colluding with Mexican drug cartels;**
- **Rep. Beth Van Duyne (R., Texas) said she is “glad to have a partner in the White House who is working with us to dismantle this harmful network”;**
- **The CCP’s international gambit has a historical element to it, drawing from China’s “Century of Humiliation” following the Opium Wars with the West.**

<sup>4</sup> Milenio, Vaping ban by decree expanded black market in Mexico (English translation) <https://www.milenio.com/politica/vapeadores-ilegales-mexico-manos-crimen-organizado>

<sup>5</sup> The Washington Reporter, K-STREET, 10,000 FEET: Inside the illicit vaping crisis: How China and Mexico’s cartels are poisoning America <https://washingtonreporter.news/p/k-street-10000-feet-inside-the-illicit>

## iJOY (Shenzhen iJOY Technology Co., LTD.) – founder, company and connections to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

iJOY, was founded by Wang Xizhi.

Vape HK reports, “...Wang Xizhi, the founder of iJOY, who is the vice president of the Electronic Cigarette Association of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, is a younger one among the “old brands”. Everyone in the industry knows that although Wang is young, he has been famous for a long time in the electronic cigarette industry. He is not only the founder of the electronic cigarette brand iJOY, but also a hidden martial art star...”<sup>6</sup>



The iJOY website states:<sup>7</sup>

*“iJOY is one of the leaders in the global electronic vape industry. iJOY prides itself on having superior quality, industrial design, and new innovative functions which have been the key elements to our products. Not only have we changed the image of traditional tobacco products, but we also have brought the ability of combining functionality and beauty to the next level...”*



iJOY is a **Board Member** of The Electronic Cigarette Professional Committee of the China Electronics Chamber of Commerce (ECCC).<sup>8</sup>

- The ECCC is controlled by the Chinese Government (the CCP), for the benefit of the CCP.
- The purpose of the ECCC is to “firmly support and implement the laws and regulations on e-cigarettes issued by the State Council and the State Tobacco Monopoly Administration.”



<sup>6</sup> Vape HK, Legendary iJoy Founder Wang Xizhi – A martial arts master in vape industry <https://vape.hk/legendary-joy-founder-wang-xizhi/>

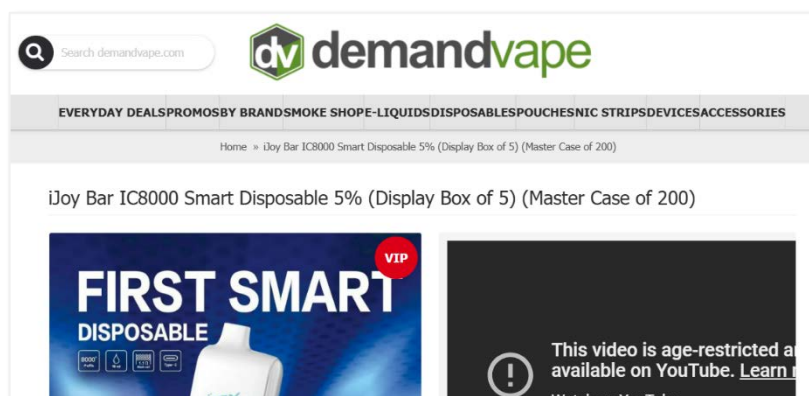
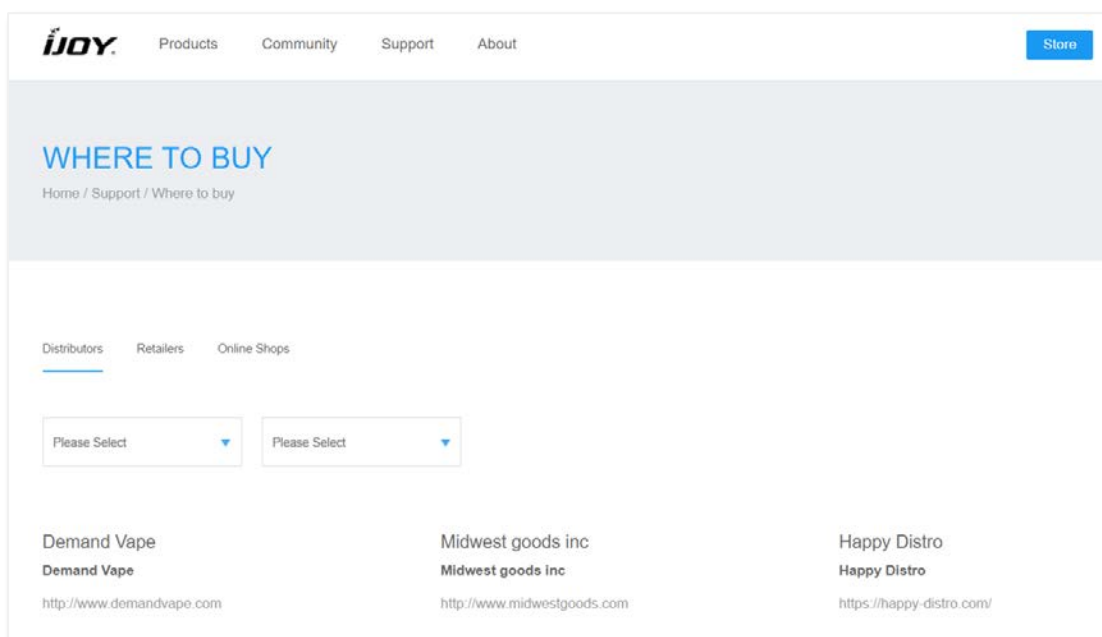
<sup>7</sup> iJOY, About iJOY Brand, <https://www.ijoycig.com/about.html>

<sup>8</sup> ECCC, ECCC Overview <https://en.eccc-china.com/eccc-overview/>; Committee Introduction (English translation) <https://eccc-china.com/profile/>

## iJOY in the U.S.:

FDA has identified iJOY products as illicit in the U.S. – including the “iJOY Bar IC8000 Disposable, Apple Juice” and “iJOY Bar SD10000 Blue Razz Ice.”<sup>9</sup>

However, a number of large distributors engaged in the sale of illegal vapes in the U.S. sell iJOY products. Many of these distributors are currently subject to law enforcement activities for selling illegal vapes.<sup>10</sup>



Note: in this example, Demand Vape continues to sell an illicit product that was named in the 2023 FDA Warning Letter to iJOY (the iJOY Bar IC8000).

<sup>9</sup> FDA, WARNING LETTER, Shenzhen IJOY Technology Co., LTD. <https://www.fda.gov/inspections-compliance-enforcement-and-criminal-investigations/warning-letters/shenzhen-ijoy-technology-co-ltd-672190-11212023>

<sup>10</sup> Office of the New York State Attorney General, Attorney General James Sues Nation’s Largest Vape Distributors for Fueling the Youth Vaping Epidemic <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/2025/attorney-general-james-sues-nations-largest-vape-distributors-fueling-youth>; iJOY, Where to Buy <https://www.ijoycig.com/partner.html>; Element Vape, iJOY <https://www.elementvape.com/ijoy>; Demand Vape, iJOY <https://www.demandvape.com/ijoy-bar-ic8000-smart-disposable-5-master-case-of-200>