

END THE SALE OF ALL MENTHOL AND FLAVORED COMMERCIAL TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Minnesotans agree: We can do more to prevent kids from becoming addicted

Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation supports ending the sale of all flavored commercial tobacco products – including menthol cigarettes, flavored cigars, e-cigarettes, hookah, and smokeless tobacco – to prevent youth addiction, advance racial and health equity and create a healthier future for everyone.

Every time Big Tobacco addicts another generation of kids to smoking, they put all taxpayers on the hook for billions of dollars in healthcare costs to treat tobacco-related diseases.

FLAVORED PRODUCTS ARE A KEY REASON MINNESOTA IS FACING A YOUTH TOBACCO EPIDEMIC

- In Minnesota, one in seven 11th graders uses e-cigarettes, and 88 percent of those students use flavored e-cigarettes.¹
- More than 70 percent of youth e-cigarette users in Minnesota are showing signs of nicotine dependence.²
- Seven in 10 youth say they use e-cigarettes “because they come in flavors [they] like.”³
- In Minnesota, 78 percent of 8th-graders and 85 percent of 11th-grade tobacco users report they use a flavored product.⁴

FLAVORED PRODUCTS MASK THE HARSHNESS OF TOBACCO, AND ARE LURING KIDS INTO ADDICTION

- The tobacco industry deliberately uses flavors to attract the next generation of tobacco users.⁵
- Today’s popular e-cigarettes contain high levels of nicotine which harms the adolescent brain development and primes youth for addiction.^{6,7}
- Candy and fruit flavored tobacco products mask the harsh taste of tobacco and are often perceived to be “safer,” but the use of such products, including menthol cigarettes, can still lead to cancer, heart disease and chronic pulmonary disease.^{8,9,10,11}
- Flavored hookah products are also targeted at youth. Hookah use is not unique to any community or culture and is becoming increasingly common among young people from many different backgrounds.¹²
- According to doctors and health experts, tobacco use sets kids up for a lifetime of nicotine addiction and serious health conditions like heart disease and cancer.

THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY TARGETS BLACK, LGBTQ+, AMERICAN INDIANS AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH MENTHOL TOBACCO

- Menthol flavoring makes it easier for kids to start smoking and harder for adults to quit.¹³
- For decades, tobacco companies have channeled menthol tobacco products into Black communities, causing death and disease.^{14,15}
- Nationally, 85 percent of Black people who smoke use menthols, versus 29 percent of white smokers.¹⁵
- The tobacco industry uses menthol to target Black Americans, LGBTQ communities, and youth.^{14,16}
- Among Minnesota teens who smoke, 33 percent report smoking menthol cigarettes.¹⁷
- In Minnesota, smoking rates among American Indians are at epidemic levels (59 percent), and 42 percent of urban American Indians who smoke use menthol cigarettes.^{18,19}

WEAK FEDERAL RULES ALLOW THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY TO USE FLAVORS TO TARGET YOUTH, MINNESOTANS

- FDA’s failure to end all flavored e-cigarette sales has led to dramatic increases among products still available, including a 1000 percent increase in disposable e-cigarette use by high schoolers.²⁰
- Today, disposable e-cigarette Puff Bar is the brand most used by middle and high school e-cigarette users.²¹
- 2.11 million students in the U.S. reported using flavored e-cigarettes, including 1.17 million using mint or menthol.²¹

- The federal government (FDA) has proposed rules that would remove flavored combustible tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars, from the marketplace. That proposed rule is not finalized and would likely face years of delays from the industry. Minnesota should act now to improve health.²²

ENDING THE SALE OF ALL FLAVORED TOBACCO PRODUCTS WILL REDUCE TOBACCO USE

- Ending the sale of all commercial flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes, flavored cigars, e-cigarettes, hookah, and smokeless tobacco will improve the health of Black communities and other groups targeted by Big Tobacco.^{14,15}
- Among Minnesota menthol smokers, half reported they would quit smoking if menthol cigarettes were no longer sold.²³

- Minnesota communities are leading the way. 25% of Minnesotans are covered by a local ordinance that restrict or prohibit the sale of flavored and/or menthol tobacco products.²⁴
- Studies show that local flavor restrictions reduce the chance that teens will ever try tobacco products.²⁵
- Minnesota’s proposal to end flavored tobacco sales has strong bipartisan support.
- These policies are overwhelmingly popular. A 2023 statewide poll found that 62 percent of Minnesotans support the proposal to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products. Support for this policy was high across demographics and regions, including among African Americans (68 percent support) and rural residents (67 percent support).²⁶

¹ Minnesota Department of Health. 2022 Minnesota Student Survey.

² Minnesota Department of Health. 2020 Minnesota Youth Tobacco Survey, 2021

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration, Center for Tobacco Products. Modifications to Compliance Policy for Certain Deemed Tobacco Products Guidance for Industry DRAFT GUIDANCE. 2019.

⁴ Minnesota Department of Health. 2022 Minnesota Student Survey.

⁵ Ritchy AP (RJR Tobacco). Apple Wine Cigarette Project. 1972. <http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu/tid/buq49d00/pdf>.

⁶ Jackler RK et al. Nicotine arms race: JUUL and the high-nicotine product market. *Tob Control*. 2019.

⁷ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report from the Surgeon General. 2016.

⁸ Muthumalage T et al. Inflammatory and oxidative responses induced by exposure to commonly used e-cigarette flavoring chemicals and flavored e-liquids without nicotine. *Front Physiol*. 2017.

⁹ Behar RZ et al. Identification of toxicants in cinnamon-flavored electronic cigarette refill fluids. *Toxicol In Vitro*. 2014.

¹⁰ Allen JG et al. Flavoring chemicals in e-cigarettes: Diacetyl, 2,3-pentanedione, and acetoin in a sample of 51 products, including fruit-, candy-, and cocktail-flavored e-cigarettes. *Environ Health Perspect*. 2016.

¹¹ Bitzer ZT et al. Effect of flavoring chemicals on free radical formation in electronic cigarette aerosols. *Free Radic Biol Med*. 2018.

¹² Momenabadi, V., Hossein Kaveh PhD, M., Hashemi, S. Y., & Borhaninejad, V. R. (2016). Factors Affecting Hookah Smoking Trend in the Society: A Review Article. *Addiction & health*, 8(2), 123–135.

¹³ U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Preliminary Scientific Evaluation of the Possible Public Health Effects of Menthol Versus Nonmenthol Cigarettes. 2013.

¹⁴ Gardiner PS. The African Americanization of menthol cigarette use in the United States. *Nicotine Tob Res*. 2004.

¹⁵ Delnevo CD et al. Banning menthol cigarettes: A social justice issue long overdue. *Nicotine Tob Res*. 2020.

¹⁶ Stevens P et al. An analysis of tobacco industry marketing to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) populations: Strategies for mainstream tobacco control and prevention. *Health Promot Pract*. 2004.

¹⁷ Minnesota Department of Health. 2020 Minnesota Student Survey: E-cigarette and Cigarette Findings. February 22, 2021.

¹⁸ American Indian Community Tobacco Projects. Tribal Tobacco Use Project Survey, Statewide American Indian Community Report. 2013.

¹⁹ Forster J, Poupard J, Rhodes K, et al. Cigarette Smoking Among Urban American Indian Adults — Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, Minnesota, 2011. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep*. 2016;2016(65):534–537.

²⁰ Wang TW et al. E-cigarette use among middle- and high-school students - United States, 2021. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep*. 2021.

²¹ Cooper M, Park-Lee E, Ren C, Cornelius M, Jamal A, Cullen KA. E-cigarette Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2022. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2022, Notes from the Field.

²² FDA news release. FDA Proposes Rules Prohibiting Menthol Cigarettes and Flavored Cigars to Prevent Youth Initiation, Significantly Reduce Tobacco-Related Disease and Death, April 28, 2022.

²³ D’Silva J et al. Quitting and switching: Menthol smokers’ responses to a menthol ban. *Tob Regul Sci*. 2015.

²⁴ Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota: <https://www.ansrmn.org/issues-resources/flavored-tobacco/>, updated January 2023.

²⁵ Farley SM, Johns M. New York City flavored tobacco product sales ban evaluation. *Tob Control*. 2016.

²⁶ The Morris Leatherman Company: Statewide Tobacco Survey, January 18-February 2, 2023.

Our Mission

Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation is a coalition of over 50 organizations that share a common goal of advancing justice by striving toward a future where every person is free from commercial tobacco’s harms and can reach their full health potential.

Note: Tobacco in this document refers specifically to the use of manufactured, commercial tobacco products, and not to the sacred, medicinal and traditional use of tobacco by American Indians and other groups.



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