

Joint Statement Urging the Biden Administration to Immediately Issue Final Rules Prohibiting Menthol Cigarettes and Flavored Cigars

Our organizations are united in our strong support for the FDA's proposed rules to prohibit menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars, and we call on the Biden Administration to issue the final rules this month, the deadline the Administration set in December when it issued the Fall 2023 Unified Agenda of regulatory actions. These rules are supported by overwhelming scientific evidence, they will have enormous benefits for our nation's health, and they are critical to achieving top priorities of the Biden Administration, especially the President's Cancer Moonshot and the Administration's commitment to promoting health equity.

We were deeply disappointed in December when the Administration delayed issuing these long-overdue rules. As tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, killing nearly half a million Americans every year, any further delay in issuing the final rules will result in needless disease, suffering and deaths. The Administration must stand up to the tobacco industry and act now to save lives.

These rules will have a profound impact on our nation's health. Once implemented, they will:

- **Protect America's kids from tobacco addiction.** Menthol cigarettes are a "starter product" for youth because menthol cools and numbs the throat, masking the harshness of tobacco smoke. Half of all youth who have ever tried smoking started with menthol cigarettes. Flavored cigars, sold in hundreds of kid-friendly flavors, also attract kids and endanger their health.
- **Advance the President's Cancer Moonshot.** As the Administration has stated, smoking causes 30% of all cancer deaths in the U.S. and is "the biggest single driver of cancer deaths in this country." These rules represent some of the most impactful actions the Administration can take to save lives from cancer, and research shows that prohibiting menthol cigarettes would help close the disparity in lung cancer death rates between Black Americans and other racial groups sooner than it otherwise would have.
- **Promote health equity.** These rules will especially improve the health of Black and other communities that have long been targeted by the tobacco industry with predatory marketing for these products. The industry has particularly targeted the Black community, causing devastating and disproportionate harm to the health of Black Americans. Other populations disproportionately impacted by menthol cigarettes include Hispanic and Asian Americans, the LGBTQ+ community, women, people with limited incomes, and people with mental health conditions.
- **Save hundreds of thousands of lives.** Researchers estimate that prohibiting menthol cigarettes will save up to 654,000 lives within 40 years, including 255,000 Black lives.

Given these enormous benefits, the Biden Administration has an obligation to issue the final rules prohibiting menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars without further delay. We urge President Biden and his Administration to seize this historic opportunity to improve our nation's health, promote health equity and save lives from cancer and other tobacco-related diseases. Delays cost lives, and inaction is unacceptable.

100 Black Men of America, Inc.
 67th Precinct Clergy Council
 Academic Pediatric Association
 Academy of General Dentistry
 Action on Smoking & Health
 African American Tobacco Control Leadership Council
 Allergy & Asthma Network
 Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
 AME Church - Social Action Commission
 American Academy of Family Physicians
 American Academy of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery
 American Academy of Pediatrics
 American Association for Cancer Research
 American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research
 American Association for Respiratory Care
 American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)
 American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
 American College Health Association (ACHA)
 American College of Cardiology
 American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST)
 American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
 American College of Physicians
 American College of Preventive Medicine
 American Dental Association
 American Heart Association
 American Indian Cancer Foundation
 American Lung Association
 American Medical Association
 American Medical Women's Association
 American Pediatric Society
 American Pharmacists Association
 American Public Health Association
 American School Health Association
 American Society of Addiction Medicine
 American Society of Hematology
 American Thoracic Society
 Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights
 Arc of Justice
 Asian American Christian Collaborative
 Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)
 Association for Clinical Oncology (ASCO)
 Association for the Treatment of Tobacco Use and Dependence
 Association of American Cancer Institutes
 Association of Black Cardiologists
 Association of Black Women Physicians
 Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
 Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
 Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
 Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
 Big Cities Health Coalition
 Black Women's Health Imperative
 BlackDoctor.org
 Breathe DC
 Breathe PA
 Breathe Southern California
 CADCA
 Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
 CATCH Global Foundation
 Catholic Health Association of the United States
 CenterLink: The Community of LGBTQ Centers
 Commissioned Officers Association of the USPHS
 Community Wellness Alliance

COPD Foundation
Counter Tools
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
DC Tobacco Free Coalition
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated
Doctors for America
Emphysema Foundation of America
First Focus on Children
Free ME from Lung Cancer
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ+ Equality
GO2 for Lung Cancer
HealthHIV
Healthy Americas Foundation
Hope for Stomach Cancer
IntelliQuit
Leadership Council for Healthy Communities
League of United Latin American Citizens
LUNgevity Foundation
March of Dimes
Mocha Moms, Inc.
NAACP
National Alliance for Hispanic Health
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Black Empowerment Council
National Black Justice Coalition
National Black Nurses Association
National Center for Health Research
National Coalition for LGBTQ Health
National Council of Negro Women (NCNW)
National Forum for Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention
National Hispanic Council on Aging
National Hispanic Medical Association
National LGBT Cancer Network
National Medical Association
National Network of Public Health Institutes
North American Quitline Consortium
Oncology Nursing Society
Parents Against Vaping e-cigarettes
Pediatric Policy Council
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation/Tobacco 21
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Public Health Law Center
Public Health Solutions
Respiratory Health Association
Right 2 Breathe
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Save A Girl Save A World
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography & Interventions
Society for Pediatric Research
Society for Public Health Education
The African American Wellness Project
The Center for Black Health & Equity
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
Trust for America's Health
Truth Initiative
Union for Reform Judaism
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease