



caused diseases. FDA is now proposing to use one of those tools – the ability to set tobacco product standards – to reduce the public health harms caused by menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars.

Menthol cools and numbs the throat, which helps mask the harshness of tobacco smoke and makes it easier for young people to start smoking. Menthol cigarettes are also more addictive and harder to quit than non-menthol cigarettes. As a result, menthol cigarettes have increased the number of youth who smoke and the number of people who die prematurely from smoking. Black communities, which have been the target of menthol cigarette marketing for decades, have been especially harmed by menthol cigarettes. Removing these products from the market would reduce the number of youth who become addicted to tobacco, save hundreds of thousands of lives, and advance health equity. Researchers estimate that removing menthol cigarettes from the market would prevent up to 654,000 smoking-related deaths over time, including over 255,000 smoking-related deaths among Black Americans.

Cigars, which come in hundreds of kid-friendly flavors like Cherry Dynamite and Tropical Fusion, are the second most popular tobacco product among youth. In 2022, half a million youth were current cigar smokers. Every day that passes, more than 800 kids try cigar smoking for the first time, and there is extensive evidence about the role flavors play in attracting youth to cigars. We need to protect kids from flavored cigars because cigar smoke is composed of the same toxic and carcinogenic constituents found in cigarette smoke. According to the National Cancer Institute, cigar smoking can cause cancer of the oral cavity, larynx, esophagus and lung.

FDA should finalize these proposed rules quickly. All flavors except menthol are already prohibited in cigarettes. Removing other flavored tobacco products from the market, including menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars, is supported by strong scientific evidence and is long overdue. We urge you to discourage any delays in the rulemaking process and reject any legislative efforts to restrict the ability of FDA to move forward with these rules or other efforts to reduce tobacco-caused disease and death. Strong FDA action to reduce tobacco use is critical, as tobacco use continues to claim the lives of nearly half a million Americans every year.

Sincerely,

Academy of General Dentistry

Action on Smoking and Health

African American Tobacco Control Leadership  
Council

Allergy & Asthma Network

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Academy of Nursing

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 Cancer Society Cancer Action  
Network

American College Health Association

American College of Cardiology

American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST)

American College of Physicians

American College of Preventive Medicine

American Heart Association

American Lung Association

American Public Health Association

American Thoracic Society

Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights

Association for Clinical Oncology  
Association for the Treatment of Tobacco Use  
and Dependence  
Association of Black Cardiologists  
Association of Maternal & Child Health  
Programs  
Association of State and Territorial Health  
Officials  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Big Cities Health Coalition  
Black Women's Health Imperative  
Breathe America  
Breathe Southern California  
CADCA  
California Black Health Network  
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
CATCH Global Foundation  
Catholic Health Association of the United States  
Center for Black Equity  
Center for Black Health and Equity  
Commissioned Officers Association of the  
USPHS  
Common Sense Media  
COPD Foundation  
Counter Tools  
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute  
Emphysema Foundation of America  
Family, Career and Community Leaders of  
America (FCCLA)  
First Focus on Children  
For Future Lungs  
H.E.A.R.T. Coalition  
International Association for the Study of Lung  
Cancer  
Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)  
League of United Latin American Citizens  
(LULAC)  
LUNgevity Foundation  
March of Dimes  
NAACP  
National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse  
Practitioners  
National Association of School Nurses  
National Association of Secondary School  
Principals  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Black Church Initiative  
National Black Nurses Association  
National Center for Health Research  
National Education Association  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National LGBT Cancer Network  
National Medical Association  
National Network of Public Health Institutes  
National Rural Health Association  
National Tongan American Society, The  
North American Quitline Consortium  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Parents Against Vaping E-cigarettes (PAVe)  
Prevent Cancer Foundation  
Preventing Tobacco Addiction  
Foundation/Tobacco 21  
Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association  
Respiratory Health Association  
Society for Research on Nicotine & Tobacco  
Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical  
Education  
Society of Thoracic Surgeons  
Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)  
Trust for America's Health  
Vaping Prevention Resource