



January 31, 2020

The Honorables Terry Tornek & Patrick Calahan
City of Pasadena & Pasadena Unified School District
100 North Garfield Avenue, Room S249
Pasadena, CA 91101

**RE: Ending the Sale of Flavored Tobacco & Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD)
Resolution**

Dear Mayor Tornek and Board President Calahan:

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is committed to protecting the health and well-being of the residents of Pasadena through evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. ACS CAN supports efforts to reduce tobacco use and eliminating the sale of flavored tobacco products is an important part of a comprehensive approach to preventing youth from ever beginning a deadly addiction to tobacco. **We support eliminating the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes, within the city of Pasadena, and without exemptions. We ask the City Council to move forward with prohibiting the sale of all flavored tobacco, including menthol and without exemptions. We also ask the School Board to adopt Resolution 2545, which encourages communities to restrict the sale of flavored tobacco products and menthol cigarettes.**

Smoking remains the leading preventable cause of death in the U.S. The 2014 U.S. Surgeon General's report found that more than 43 million Americans still smoke. It is estimated that tobacco use will cause 480,000 deaths this year in the U.S. Both opponents of smoking and purveyors of cigarettes have long recognized the significance of adolescence as the period during which smoking behaviors are typically developed. National data show that about 95 percent of adult tobacco users begin smoking before the age of 21, and most begin with a flavored product. In 2009, Congress prohibited the sale of cigarettes with flavors other than tobacco or menthol. Tobacco companies responded by expanding the types of non-cigarette tobacco products they offer, and now make most of those products available in a growing array of kid-friendly flavors. Little cigars, smokeless tobacco, hookah, and e-cigarettes are marketed in a wide variety of candy flavors with colorful packaging and deceptive names that appeal to youth.

Adolescents are still going through critical periods of brain growth and development and are especially vulnerable to the toxic effects of nicotine. A study published in the journal, *Pediatrics*, found that the earlier youth are exposed to nicotine, the less likely they will be able to quit smoking. Tobacco companies have a long history of marketing to vulnerable populations, and target youth with imagery and by marketing candy and fruit flavored tobacco. The

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anesthetizing effects of menthol masks the harshness of tobacco, making it more appealing to beginning smokers, and menthol smokers show greater dependence, and are less likely to quit than non-menthol smokers. Postponing youth experimentation and initiation can help reduce the number of youths who will ever begin smoking.

Removing flavored tobacco is also a social justice issue. Tobacco companies have aggressively marketed menthol to youth in communities of color, the LGBT community, and those in low income neighborhoods. These are the same communities who already bear a greater burden of health disparities and often have less access to healthcare. Increasing tobacco use in these communities increases the health disparities among the most vulnerable in our communities. Presently, more than 30 jurisdictions in places as diverse as Yolo County, Contra Costa County, and the cities of Beverly Hills and Richmond have passed strong policies.

While cigarette smoking has declined in recent years, use of menthol and other flavored products have continued to increase, especially among young people and beginning smokers. We strongly encourage this council to choose the strongest protections available by prohibiting the citywide sale of flavored tobacco products including menthol cigarettes with no exemptions and we encourage the School Board to pass Resolution 2545. Taking this important public health step will help to prevent young people in Pasadena from ever beginning this deadly addiction, as well as help to support those who are trying to quit.

Sincerely,



Primo J. Castro
Director, Government Relations
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

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February 3, 2020

2020 FEB -3 PM 3:43

The Honorable Mayor Terry Tornek and City Council
Pasadena City Hall
100 N Garfield Ave
Pasadena, CA 91109

CITY CLERK
CITY OF PASADENA

Dear Pasadena City Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for an ordinance that prohibits the sale of menthol and flavored tobacco products and nicotine products of any type. The City of Pasadena should join many progressive California cities in taking action against the vaping epidemic. Flavored e-cigarettes are just the newest way that Big Tobacco is hooking a new generation of smokers.

As someone who identifies as part of the LGBTQ community, this topic is personal. LGBTQ people are more likely to smoke menthol cigarettes than their straight, cisgender counterparts. Big Tobacco has targeted the LGBTQ community with predatory marketing, starting with their campaign called Project SCUM (Sub-Culture Urban Marketing) in the 1990s. Is that what Big Tobacco thinks of LGBTQ people? SCUM? LGBTQ populations already face worse health outcomes than the general population and we don't need Big Tobacco's products hooking us to a lifetime of smoking or vaping.

I urge the Pasadena City Council to protect our community's health by prohibiting the sale of menthol and flavored tobacco and nicotine products. This is common sense public health policy. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Chu
259 N Euclid Ave Apt 22
Pasadena, CA 91101
626-375-6453

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