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The Community Speaks Out – Dozens of Organizations Join Coalition to End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco in Phoenix

PHOENIX – Phoenix voters and a wide-ranging group of allies that collectively represent the interest of over 60 public health, education, youth and social services, and advocacy organizations have joined the Flavors Hook Kids Phoenix Coalition to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products in Phoenix.

The Surgeon General has declared the rise of teen vaping an “epidemic” – 3.6 million youth, 19.6% of high school students and 4.7% of middle school students use e-cigarettes – including one of six Arizona high school students. Following the rise in e-cigarette use, the overall tobacco use rate among high school students in 2019 was at the highest level (31.2%) in 19 years.

These organizations are committed to helping Phoenix lead in the effort to eliminate the sale of all flavored tobacco products through a comprehensive ordinance that includes licensing all tobacco retailers and active enforcement that includes fines and license suspension and revocation for non-compliant retailers:

- African American Christian Clergy Coalition
- American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
- American Heart Association
- American Lung Association
- Arizona Academy of Family Physicians
- Arizona Academy of Pediatricians
- Arizona Alliance of Black School Educators
- Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers
- Arizona Asthma Coalition
- Arizona Association of Health Plans
- Arizona Medical Association
- Arizona Nurses Association
- Arizona Osteopathic Medical Association
- Arizona Public Health Association
- Arizona School Boards Association
- Arizona School Administrators
- Arizona Thoracic Society
- Arizonans Concerned About Smoking
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona
- Black Mothers Forum
- Black Nurses Association of Greater Phoenix Area
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Phoenix
- Chicanos Por La Causa
- Cancer Support Community - Arizona
- Children’s Action Alliance
- Community Bridges
- Health System Alliance of Arizona
  - Banner Health
  - Dignity Health
  - HonorHealth
  - Tenet Healthcare
- Help Enrich African American Lives Coalition
- Maricopa County Medical Society
- Maricopa Area Labor Federation
- National African American Tobacco Prevention Network
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- notMYkids
- School Nurses Organization of Arizona
- Vincere Cancer Center
- Valle del Sol
These organizations are backing the effort by Councilmember Michael Nowakowski to end the sale of flavored tobacco products, including flavored e-cigarettes, menthol cigarettes, flavored cigars and flavored smokeless tobacco. Research shows that 80% of teens who have ever used tobacco started with a flavored product.

It is not just flavored e-cigarettes that are having negative effects. For decades, the tobacco industry has aggressively targeted communities of color with flavored products. Forty-seven percent of Hispanics who smoke and 85% of all African Americans who smoke use menthol cigarettes. Seven out of 10 African American youth who smoke and 57% of Hispanic youth who smoke use menthol cigarettes. This results in a disproportionate burden of tobacco-related disease and death. African Americans are more likely to die from tobacco-related diseases like cancer, heart disease and stroke than any other race or ethnic group in the United States.

With enactment of the ordinance, Phoenix would join a growing number of states and cities across the country that have passed similar laws to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.

For more information visit www.flavorshookkidsphoenix.org and follow on social media at @FlavorsHookKidsPhoenix.

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