No Menthol Sunday Press Release Template

Drafted April 16, 2021

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE**

**CONTACT NAME AND INFO**

**It’s time to address the original flavored tobacco – menthol**

(**CITY, WI**) – The FDA has recently taken action on a number of candy and fruit-flavored tobacco products designed to draw youth in. However, one flavor remains untouched – menthol.

This Sunday, May 16, is No Menthol Sunday, an annual event where the faith community and allies spread awareness of tobacco’s impact on Black health, provide support to those trying to quit, and raise awareness on issues related to menthol, including industry targeting. For decades, tobacco companies have co-opted Black culture, including music and imagery, to target menthol tobacco products at Black Americans ([INCLUDE EXAMPLES FROM HERE](https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/targeted-communities/tracing-racist-tactics-tobacco-industry)).

“**TALK ABOUT OTHER STRATEGIES THE INDUSTRY HAS USED TO TARGET THE BLACK COMMUNITY**,” said (**CONTACT NAME**). “**DISCUSS ONE OF THEM IN YOUR QUOTE USING THOSE LISTED AT** <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tobaccoischanging/menthol.htm>.”

Sadly, tobacco companies have had great success in marketing their products – especially menthol – to Black people. The [Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK)](https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0006.pdf) reports that 85% of Black smokers use menthol cigarettes, compared to 29% of white smokers. Here in Wisconsin, 9 in 10 Black smokers use menthol. CTFK also finds that 72,000 Black Americans are diagnosed with a tobacco-related cancer each year. At the same time, the relative five-year survival rate for lung cancer is also lower among Black people than white people.

“The tobacco industry’s relentless marketing to the Black community is bad enough, but their tactics combined with other factors make it even harder for those in the Black community to avoid tobacco use and stay healthy,” said (**CONTACT NAME**). “**USE THE SECOND PART OF YOUR QUOTE TO PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF THESE OTHER FACTORS FROM** https://tobwis.org/documents/472/4edpacket\_industry\_targeting.pdf)”.

No Menthol Sunday, a national day of observance led by the Center for Black Health and Equity, helps raise awareness on these issues and support efforts to create tobacco-free communities where menthol and tobacco-related diseases are a thing of the past.

**“Tobacco is the number one killer of Black Americans, but working together we can change this,” said (CONTACT NAME) The ALLIANCE/COALITION NAME knows that a healthier Black community means a healthier Wisconsin for us all, so we’re taking action like (GIVE EXAMPLES OF YOUR LOCAL WORK – PRESENTATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS, OTHER OUTREACH) and observing events like No Menthol Sunday to help address this issue.”**

People can learn more about menthol and other flavors at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tobaccoischanging/menthol.htm>. They can also learn more at the site about best practice policies like flavor restrictions that can help us repair the damage menthol and other tobacco products have done to too many communities.

If you smoke and are ready to quit, call 1-800-QUIT NOW (784-8669) for free help. If you are interested in helping insure all communities have a fair shot at being tobacco-free, **VISIT/CALL ALLIANCE/COALITION URL, SOCIAL MEDIA, ETC.**