Menthol’s Impact Template Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE**

**CONTACT NAME AND INFO**

**New report: Menthol Marketing’s Staggering Impact on the Black community**

(**CITY, WI**) – A new study published in the journal [Tobacco Control](https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/early/2021/09/16/tobaccocontrol-2021-056748) details the astounding consequences of the tobacco industry’s decades of targeted marketing of menthol tobacco products to Black Americans. The report found that between 1980-2018, menthol cigarettes were responsible for:

* 1.5 million new Black smokers
* 157,000 premature Black deaths
* 1.5 million years of lost life for Black Americans

Members of the (**ALLIANCE NAME**) said the study’s heartbreaking results are no coincidence.

“The tobacco industry has focused their advertising of menthol tobacco products on the Black community for decades,” said (**CONTACT NAME**). “The abundance of price promotions and tobacco retailers flooding minority and low income neighborhoods is intentional, and it’s a huge driver of higher tobacco use rates in those communities.”

The obstacles (**CONTACT NAME**) mentions are found right here in Wisconsin. Data from the 2016-2018 Wisconsin Retail Assessment Project show Black neighborhoods have a 50 percent higher density of tobacco retailers than white neighborhoods (making it more likely for the retailers to be located near schools). The project also found that price promotions for menthol products were twice as likely to be found in Wisconsin’s Black neighborhoods than in white ones.

(**CONTACT NAME**) says the tragedy is compounded by the extreme addictiveness of menthol cigarettes. “Menthol cigarettes are just as harmful to the body as other cigarettes. The flavoring does not make them safer,” said (**CONTACT NAME**). “In fact, they’re easier to start and harder to quit.”

Here in (**COMMUNITY/COUNTY NAME**), the (**ALLIANCE NAME**) is educating the community about the targeted marketing of menthol and its impacts by (**DISCUSS ACTIVITIES YOUR ALLIANCE IS DOING RELATED TO MENTHOL – MEETINGS, PRESENTATIONS, EDUCATIONAL ADVOCACY, ETC.** **HERE’S AN EXAMPLE FROM THE WISCONSIN AFRICAN AMERICAN TOBACCO PREVENTION** **– PLEASE CUSTOMIZE TO BEST DESCRIBE YOUR ALLIANCE’S WORK):** *Elected officials in Wisconsin, including the Legislative Black Caucus and several local mayors, have spoken up about menthol. For the last five years, they’ve joined tobacco prevention groups, faith leaders, congregants, retailers and others across the state in participating in No Menthol Sunday, a national day to raise awareness about menthol’s impact.*

For more on menthol products and how the flavor is used in an increasing number of tobacco and nicotine products, visit www.tobaccoischanging.com. Community members can also learn more about tobacco prevention activities in (**COMMUNITY NAME**) by visiting (**ALLIANCE URL, SOCIAL MEDIA, etc**.).

Free help to quit tobacco products is available. Call 1-800-QUIT NOW or, if you’re Medicaid, talk to your doctor about the quitting support offered through the Medicaid Cessation Benefit.

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