



**MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT  
SFY 2024 Executive Budget Proposal to End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco and  
Increase the State Cigarette Tax to Protect the Next Generation**

**The New York State Public Health Association strongly supports the SFY 2024 Executive Budget proposals that would end the sale of all flavored tobacco products and raise the cigarette tax.** These proposals if enacted will make tobacco products less appealing and more expensive for youth and will to prevent another generation falling victim to this deadly addiction. They would also close loopholes in the State law restricting the sale of flavored e-cigarettes to ensure effective compliance.

**Flavors are a marketing weapon used by tobacco manufacturers to target youth and young people to a lifetime of addiction.** According to the 2022 National Youth Tobacco Survey, more than 2.5 million kids across the country are using tobacco products. Overall, 85% of high school and 81% of middle school students use flavored products with fruit, candy/desserts/other sweets, mint, and menthol reported as the most popular flavors. If New York is to ever succeed in ending the cycle of addiction to tobacco, it is imperative that we stop enabling the tobacco companies to take advantage of our children and end the sale of all flavored tobacco products including menthol cigarettes.

**Tobacco manufacturers have aggressively targeted communities of color and LGBTQ+ communities with menthol products,** leading to an unequal burden of death and disease. Internal tobacco industry documents show that these companies have intentionally targeted African Americans and other minorities through advertising in magazines with high readership by these populations, including youth, and targeting specific neighborhoods with higher Hispanic and African American populations with free product giveaways, advertising, and promotions to make products cheaper in those neighborhoods. In the absence of a comprehensive proposal that includes all flavors, all products, and all retailers, and tightening enforcement the existing flavored e-cigarette ban, targeted communities and youth will continue to start tobacco use with flavored products. To respond to one criticism floated by Big Tobacco, the proposal does *not* make it illegal to possess, purchase, or use flavored tobacco products. The law would target the retailers who sell them and the police have no role in its enforcement.

**The proposed increase in the cigarette tax in the SFY 2024 Executive Budget by \$1 per pack will reduce tobacco initiation and use, especially among youth.** Cigarette taxes have not been increased in New York State in over ten years. According to the U.S. Surgeon General and World Health Organization, increasing the price of cigarettes is one of the most effective ways to prevent and reduce smoking, especially among youth. Raising the tax on tobacco encourages cessation and reduces youth initiation, which will translate to significant reductions in tobacco-related death and disease and associated health care costs. The revenue generated from the proposal is estimated to be \$51 million.

**NYSPPHA also recommends that \$13 million of the increased tax revenues go to fund the state health department Tobacco Control Program (TCP) bringing its total budget to \$52 million.** The TBC operates the state Quitline, provide free nicotine replacement therapy, and runs hard-hitting anti-smoking ads, all of which help smokers quit and stop new smokers from starting.

**NYSPPHA supports these budget proposals, which take a huge step toward decreasing tobacco initiation and use by youth, saving lives across New York for generations to come. It is up to us to prevent our children and loved ones from being preyed upon by the tobacco industry and being exploited for profit. We respectfully urge your support for these lifesaving proposals.**

New York State Public Health Association, 2/2023

Contact us at [Advocacy@nyspha.org](mailto:Advocacy@nyspha.org)