



## Senate Advances State Legislation to End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco

*LA Youth, Health Advocates Call on LA City Council to Move Quickly to Pass Local Legislation*

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LOS ANGELES – Following the 8-1 vote in the California State Senate Health Committee to advance Senate Bill 793, **Marc Carrel, a leader in the Los Angeles Families Fighting Flavored Tobacco coalition and CEO of BREATHE California of Los Angeles County** released the following statement:

“The skyrocketing rate of teenage use of flavored tobacco and e-cigarettes is alarming and new data show that the vaping and e-cigarette industry is banking on this number increasing if we don’t act. In fact, in the last two years industry profits are driven primarily by teen usage of vaping products. The state legislature is right to act, but that doesn’t let cities and counties off the hook. Elected leaders in Los Angeles have the power to act and put an immediate end to the sale of flavored tobacco. Any more time wasted will cost more teens their health and lives. There is urgency to act at the local and state levels immediately.”

The Stop Tobacco Access to Kids Enforcement (STAKE) Act, or SB 793, is sponsored by Sen. Jerry Hill and would end the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol, in California.

### **Momentum to End the Sale of Flavored Tobacco is Surging:**

- A new poll released by Change Research shows that California voters overwhelmingly support SB 793 to end the sale of flavored tobacco products that appeal to kids, including fruit and candy-flavored e-cigarettes, menthol-flavored cigarettes, and other flavored tobacco products. Nearly 7 of 10 voters (69%) support with just 24% opposed.
- **Oakland’s City Council** took an important step Tuesday to protect the health of its kids by ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products at all locations with no exemptions. This action – which covers flavored e-cigarettes, cigars and menthol cigarettes – will reverse skyrocketing youth use of e-cigarettes and stop tobacco companies from targeting and addicting kids with flavored products.

Oakland was one of the first cities to prohibit most sales of flavored tobacco products when it acted in 2017. But its exemption for so-called adult-only tobacco stores created a loophole that the tobacco industry has shamelessly exploited. While just a handful of such shops existed



before the law, more than 55 currently operate in the city, with some of these “adult-only tobacco stores” simply being walled-off areas in a store or gas station.

The vast majority of local, state and county ordinances to end the sale of flavored tobacco passed in the last two years have included menthol, the most popular flavor. More than half of youth cigarette smokers – including **7 out of 10 African American youth cigarette smokers – smoke menthol cigarettes – the tobacco industry’s number one flavor.** As a consequence, African Americans suffer high rates of tobacco-related diseases such as lung cancer, heart disease, and stroke. The evidence shows that candy-flavored tobacco, including menthol, makes it easier for kids to start smoking and harder for smokers to quit.