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**CITY COUNCIL PASSES ORDINANCE BANNING THE SALE OF FLAVORED VAPING PRODUCTS AS THE CITY TAKES ANOTHER IMPORTANT STEP TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE**

*Vaping is on the rise among young people and flavors are used to lure them to the product*

**CHICAGO** – The Chicago City Council passed an ordinance today banning the sale of flavored vaping products in the city as another important step in preventing young people from picking up the habit and potentially developing a lifelong addiction. The ordinance specifically targets flavored liquid nicotine products that create the taste or aroma of, among other things, menthol, mint, wintergreen, chocolate, vanilla, cocoa, or candy or dessert.

“With flavors like candy and chocolate, these products are designed to entice youth, and we as a City have a responsibility to do everything we can to prevent that from happening,” said Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot. “This ordinance is an important step, but more must be done to protect our young people’s health from vaping and the tobacco industry’s efforts to have them to develop life-threatening habits.”

“I have always been an advocate for Chicago’s children, and I am proud to be the chief sponsor of an ordinance that promotes their health and safety by banning the sale of flavored vaping products,” said Ald. O’Shea (19th Ward).

With both vapor products and combustible tobacco, such flavors are targeted to youth and can also mislead them to believe that flavored products are safer than other tobacco products. Studies have shown that 80% of youth tobacco users started with a flavored product, and 80% of youth and young adult users say they would quit if flavored tobacco products were unavailable.

“I congratulate the City Council for addressing flavors comprehensively in this vape-focused ordinance, rather than carving out specific flavors,” said Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) Commissioner Allison Arwady, M.D. “And I look forward to seeing this body take this same comprehensive approach to flavors



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in the future, as together we address combustible products and work to improve the health and life expectancy of all Chicagoans.”

The City has filed a number of lawsuits against vape product manufacturers and retailers for deceptive marketing and illegal sales to kids. Chicago was one of the first cities in the nation to add e-cigarettes to its Clean Indoor Air Ordinance, the first big city to impose a vaping tax, and the first jurisdiction anywhere to include menthol in a flavored tobacco sales ban, which covers stores within 500 feet of high schools. Numerous other jurisdictions have now passed flavored tobacco bans that include menthol, most recently California. Research shows that menthol cigarettes—most common among African Americans—are more addictive and harder to quit than other tobacco products.

“We have come a long way. Twenty years ago, one in four teens in Chicago smoked cigarettes. Today, that number is down to one in 25,” said Dr. Arwady. “Yet the growing vaping epidemic is unacceptable, as are the increasing inequities in tobacco use. To advance health and equity, we must keep going.”

A new report from CDPH found that the rate of cigarette smoking by youth in Chicago is down to 3.9%, a historic low, yet vaping is on the rise and racial disparities in tobacco use have widened. If combustible and vapor products are combined, 16.6% of high school students in Chicago use some form of tobacco—a 12% increase since 2017. This increase is driven by an 88% increase in the vaping rate, while traditional cigarette use has fallen, the report found. Not all youth in Chicago are faring equally. Cigarette use by young Black males has risen 32% in the past two years even as all other demographics see declines. Moreover, the vaping rate for Black youth more than quadrupled in the last two years, by far the highest increase across racial and ethnic groups.

Along with the vaping ordinance, Mayor Lightfoot and the City Council also introduced a resolution today committing themselves to further action on vaping and tobacco. The resolution speaks to the City’s “dedication to continuing to work on crafting and enacting legislation to ban the sale of all flavored tobacco products citywide, including menthol cigarettes.”

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