Flavored tobacco products lure kids into a lifelong struggle with tobacco addiction. How? They become hooked on tobacco products targeted to them in flavors like mint or menthol, gummy bear, and cotton candy. Electronic smoking devices, often called e-cigarettes or vapes, deliver massive doses of nicotine, a highly addictive drug. Nicotine use can harm brain development in adolescents and increase their risk of addiction to other dangerous substances.1

Tobacco companies have a long history of using flavors to make their products more appealing to new users, almost all of whom are kids. Flavors like menthol mask the harsh taste of tobacco, making it easier for kids to smoke, leading to lifelong addiction. For decades, tobacco companies have aggressively targeted Black and Brown communities with their menthol products, leading to a devastating and unequal burden of death and disease.4

80% of young people who have ever used tobacco started with a flavored product, and flavor options likely fueled a surge in the use of e-cigarettes by Maryland’s high school students.2

23% of Maryland high school students currently use e-cigarettes—a rate 5 times higher than adults.

6% smoke cigars
5% smoke cigarettes
4.6% use smokeless tobacco3

85% of all African American smokers use menthol cigarettes.5

The federal government has failed to protect kids from flavored tobacco, only restricting flavors in some types of electronic smoking devices, leaving countless flavored tobacco products—including menthol cigarettes—widely available for use by kids. The federal government has failed to protect kids from flavored tobacco, only restricting flavors in some types of electronic smoking devices, leaving countless flavored tobacco products—including menthol cigarettes—widely available for use by kids. To protect the health and futures of Maryland’s youth, we must end the sale of ALL flavored tobacco products.

Support legislation ending the sale of flavored tobacco in Maryland, including but not limited to electronic smoking devices, menthol cigarettes, flavored cigars, and smokeless tobacco.
E-cigarettes are not approved by the FDA as a quit smoking aid. To date, research shows limited evidence that e-cigarettes are effective for helping smokers quit. What we do know is that tobacco use in any form, including e-cigarettes, is unsafe. The nicotine found in tobacco is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development, attention, memory, and learning.

There Are No Safe Tobacco Products

Ending the sale of flavored tobacco products has broad support in Maryland. A partial list of endorsing organization from across the state include:

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids American Lung Association NAACP Maryland State Conference PAVE Maryland PIRG Advocates for Children and Youth Maryland Association of School Health Nurses Maryland Public Health Association Maryland GASP Maryland PTA Center for Black Equity SEIU 1199 Healthcare for All MedChi AFSCME Council 3 Baltimore Teachers Union Union Baptist Church Communities United Jubilee Arts Community Law in Action Roots and Raices Douglas Memorial Church Parent and Community Advisory Board of Baltimore African American Tobacco Control Leadership Council Sharp Street Memorial Church Maryland Center for Economic Policy UFCW Local 1994 Black Democrats of Montgomery County Maryland Assembly of School Based Healthcare Baltimore Jewish Council Youth Activism Project Gray Panthers of Metropolitan Washington DC Am Kolel Jewish Renewal Community Baltimore Urban Debate League Montrose View Psychotherapy Associates S. Hunt Aero, LLC Braid-Forbes Health Research Share Tefila Congregation Zion Baptist Church Bowie State University Student Athletic Advisory Committee Greater Baltimore Urban League Centro de Apoyo Familiar Sister 4 Sisters Network, Inc. Coppin Heights Community Development The Virago Project Bethel World Outreach Church Shepherd’s Clinic