

### BIG TOBACCO HAS TARGETED HISPANIC AND LATINO COMMUNITIES WITH MENTHOL CIGARETTES FOR DECADES

# THE INDUSTRY'S TARGETING HAS HAD A DEVASTATING IMPACT ON HISPANIC AND LATINO HEALTH



## **IT'S TIME TO ELIMINATE MENTHOL CIGARETTES**

# MENTHOL CIGARETTES POSE AN ENORMOUS PUBLIC HEALTH THREAT

- Menthol is a chemical compound that cools and numbs the throat and reduces the harshness of tobacco. The FDA has found that menthol cigarettes are more addictive, easier for kids to start smoking and harder for people who smoke to quit.
- Half of youth who have ever tried smoking started with menthol cigarettes.
- Between 1980 and 2018, menthol cigarettes were responsible for 10.1 million additional new smokers, and 378,000 premature deaths.

### HISPANIC AND LATINO COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN TARGETED WITH MENTHOL CIGARETTES FOR DECADES

- The tobacco industry has targeted Hispanic and Latino communities with marketing for menthol cigarettes through sponsorship of cultural and music events, ads in Spanish language magazines, and retail marketing.
- Hispanic and Latino communities have high exposure to tobacco marketing because their neighborhoods have more tobacco retailers.
- As a result of the tobacco industry's targeting, menthol cigarette use is high among Hispanic Americans: 50 percent of Hispanic people who smoke use menthol cigarettes compared to 29 percent of White people who smoke.

### MENTHOL CIGARETTES HAVE HAD A HARMFUL IMPACT ON THE HEALTH OF HISPANIC AND LATINO AMERICANS

- Cancer, heart disease, and stroke all of which can be caused by cigarette smoking are leading causes of death among Hispanic Americans.
- More than 43,000 Hispanics are diagnosed with a tobacco-related cancer each year and more than 18,000 die from a tobacco-related cancer each year.
- A majority of Hispanic smokers want to quit smoking but menthol cigarettes make quitting more difficult.



"The tobacco industry has targeted our community events – cultural events – where families come together to celebrate ... It's just nonstop, trying to include a sense of assimilation that it would be cool to smoke."

**DR. ELENA RIOS** PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE NATIONAL HISPANIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (NHMA)