



CONTACT:

Steph McCorkle
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
916 802-4033 Steph.McCorkle@cancer.org

Tobacco Industry: New Face, Same Dirty Tricks
San Franciscans Too Smart to Fall for Big Tobacco's Shameful Tactics

San Francisco, CA – July 31, 2017— Leading health organizations and community groups expressed outrage today over Big Tobacco's desperate plan to woo and mislead San Francisco voters into rolling back vital new public health laws aimed at reducing smoking. The tobacco industry, including e-cigarette makers, is shamelessly using the referendum process to maximize profits while its customers suffer death and disease, and local taxpayers continue to foot the bill for tobacco-related illnesses.

Statement from Bob Gordon, co-chair of the San Francisco Tobacco-Free Coalition

“Ending the sale of flavored tobacco products is an issue of not just health, but social justice. We cannot afford to do anything less than everything we can to protect young people from tobacco addiction. New tobacco users are disproportionately African American, Asian American, LGBTQ and from low-income communities already significantly impacted by tobacco-related disease.

“It is no surprise that Big Tobacco is now pushing back with a greedy attempt to qualify a referendum to undo the historic public health strides made by San Francisco leadership. San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee signed into law the most comprehensive flavored tobacco restrictions in the country on July 7th after the Board of Supervisors heard compelling evidence that the tobacco industry markets flavored products including menthol cigarettes as ‘starter’ products to attract kids and minorities and potentially trigger a lifetime of addiction.

“The destructive impact on the African American community is clear as African Americans smoke menthol cigarettes at very high rates and quit smoking at lower rates, and African American men have notably high death rates from lung cancer. Menthol has long been the industry's means of keeping communities of color addicted to nicotine. It must stop. Cancer and lung disease are crippling these communities.

“Flavored tobacco products – including e-cigarettes with names like Cotton Candy and Gummy Bear—are a key part of the tobacco industry's strategy to bait youth into becoming tomorrow's addicted users. The tobacco industry is desperate. They have one goal in mind: Hooking young, new customers to replace dying smokers. Studies show that teens who use e-cigarettes are four times as likely to smoke traditional cigarettes a year later.



“We are not going to stand by quietly while children’s lives are at stake. The referendum is unscrupulous, and we are already at work further educating voters in San Francisco who are already hip to the devious tactics Big Tobacco uses to maintain profits at the expense of people’s lives.

“Tobacco use is responsible for one-third of the cancer deaths in this country and causes nearly half a million deaths annually from all tobacco-related illnesses including heart and lung disease. According to a government study, 81 percent of kids who have ever used tobacco started with a flavored product and 70 percent of current youth tobacco users had used a flavored tobacco product in the past month.”

The *No More Flavored Tobacco* coalition comprises the African American Tobacco Control Leadership Council, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Americans for Nonsmokers’ Rights (ANR), Breathe California, and Tobacco-Free Kids Action Fund. The group has launched an educational [website](#) to inform the Bay Area about what’s at stake if flavored tobacco products aren’t reined in. Featured on the website is the [report](#) “*The Flavor Trap: How Tobacco Companies Are Luring Kids with Candy-Flavored E-Cigarettes and Cigars*” that details the dangers of flavored tobacco and how it is being marketed to hook the next generation to a potential lifetime nicotine addiction. Learn more at www.NoMoreFlavoredTobacco.org.

About American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network is the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society. ACS CAN supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. ACS CAN works to encourage elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN gives ordinary people extraordinary power to fight cancer with the training and tools they need to make their voices heard. For more information, visit <http://www.acscan.org/>.

About American Heart Association and American Stroke Association

The American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association are devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – the two leading causes of death in the world. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The American Heart Association is the nation’s oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. The American Stroke Association is a division of the American Heart Association. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit heart.org or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About the American Lung Association in California

The American Lung Association in California is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through research, education and advocacy. The Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer, to improve the air we breathe, to reduce the burden of lung disease on individuals and their families, and to eliminate tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases. For more information about the American Lung Association in



California or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-685-4872) or visit www.lung.org/california

About the Tobacco-Free Kids Action Fund

The mission of the Tobacco-Free Kids Action Fund is to improve health and save lives by reducing tobacco use, the number one cause of preventable death in the United States and around the world. We mount education, advocacy and electoral campaigns in support of public policies that prevent kids from smoking, help smokers quit and protect everyone from secondhand smoke.

About Breathe California

Through grassroots education, advocacy and services, Breathe California fights lung disease, advocates for clean air and advances public health in our local communities. Since 1908, we have addressed the most serious health threats of our time through grassroots programs that empower individual, institutional and community change for better breathing and healthier living. We have local offices in San Francisco, San Jose, Los Angeles, Monterey and Sacramento. Visit us: www.breathecalifornia.org

About Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights

Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights is the leading national lobbying organization (501 (c) 4), dedicated since 1976 to nonsmokers' rights, taking on the tobacco industry at all levels of government, protecting nonsmokers from exposure to secondhand smoke, and preventing tobacco addiction among youth. ANR pursues an action-oriented program of policy and legislation. Visit <http://www.no-smoke.org/>.

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