



Big Win for Kids: U.S. House Approves Bill to Reverse Youth E-Cigarette Epidemic, Prohibit Flavored Tobacco Products

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Contact: Damaris Lara, 213.924.2419, damaris.lara@berlinrosen.com

LOS ANGELES – The U.S. House of Representatives today delivered a historic victory for kids over the tobacco industry by voting to prohibit all flavored tobacco products, including flavored e-cigarettes, menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars.

Several Los Angeles leaders led the charge, including Rep. Karen Bass, chair of the Congressional Black Congress. Reps. Maxine Waters and Barbara Lee were also co-sponsors of the measure.

Rep. Karen Bass said:

“The real issue here is that there is a dying industry looking for a new generation of smokers because the national movement that fought to protect the health of the public from adverse consequences of tobacco has been so successful. The marketing of flavored cigarettes is the 2020 version of Joe Camel and candy cigarettes. Today, by passing the Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act, the House of Representatives took a strong step in fighting back against these attempts to coerce some of our most vulnerable populations into unhealthy habits.”

BACKGROUND:

Today, more than half of youth smokers – including 7 out of 10 African American youth smokers – smoke menthol cigarettes. And African Americans suffer high rates of tobacco-related diseases such as lung cancer, heart disease and stroke. The evidence shows that menthol makes it easier for kids to start smoking and harder for smokers to quit.

H.R. 2339, the Protecting American Lungs and Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act, marks the first time that a house of Congress has voted to prohibit the sale of all flavored tobacco products. Among other things, the bill also makes critical investments in initiatives to prevent kids from using tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, and help more smokers quit, especially in medically underserved communities.

It is supported by over 75 public health, medical, education, parent, civil rights and other organizations.