

Dear House Human Services Committee Members:

Today I am writing to express my support for ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol. Kids ages 12-17 are the highest users of menthol cigarettes. I was once one of them and I know what a hard habit it was to break. 54% of young smokers start by using menthol as I did.

Banning menthol and flavors in tobacco, e-cigarette and other tobacco products would reduce the number of youth who start smoking, reduce the overall number of tobacco users and benefit public health. Evidence shows that youth will transition to menthol products if they are not included in a flavor ban.

The high use of menthol is a direct result of predatory targeting by tobacco companies and the health of Black, youth, and LGBTQ Vermonters is directly impacted.

Please put the health of Vermonters first and pass S.18 to end the sale of all flavored tobacco.

May I count on your support?

Sincerely,

Bradley J. Bender

Danby Select Board Chair