



To: House Committee on Human Services

From: Jay Nichols , Executive Director

Date: January 17, 2024

Subject: S. 18 Vaping and Menthol Products

For the record, Jay Nichols, Executive Director the Vermont Principals' Association.

Please accept this written testimony as support from the Vermont Principals' Association as full endorsement of passing S. 18 and banning flavored tobacco products and e-liquids **including Menthol products**. If you would like me to appear in person or via zoom to testify on this bill, I would be happy to do so. As you know, I testified in favor of the bill last year and our organization has signed on to the letter supporting this legislation.

The real purpose of this communication is centered around menthol products. As repeated testimony has demonstrated, menthol is where kids will gravitate if other flavored vaping tobacco products are disallowed in our state. Banning menthol products in Vermont is essential to protecting our next generation who are already being directly affected and targeted by Big Tobacco. In fact, thousands of children, as you have heard from experts working with students, have been addicted already in Vermont including students as early as third graders.

Let's do everything we can to make sure that vaping products are not sweet, do not smell good, and do not present as a very attractive choice for students. If I had it my way, all vaping products would smell like an active skunk or at least a very wet dog! The later in life children engage with these products the better off we all will be. The medical costs, the negative impact on health insurance and other health care financial risks and the overall impact on Vermont's economy long term are immense. And, of course, most importantly by banning these products and making tobacco products as undesirable as possible we will save lives.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jay Nichols