

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, After years of decline, tobacco use is growing at alarming rates, especially among youth, while Black life expectancy is also decreasing as a result of tobacco use; and

WHEREAS, As a society, we are losing another generation to tobacco addiction, with tobacco use up for the first time in decades as a result of vaping and flavored tobacco products; and

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago is dedicated to protecting its communities, especially youth, from tobacco use - the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Chicago and the United States; and

WHEREAS, By aggressively promoting flavored tobacco products such as menthol cigarettes, mango e-cigarettes and chocolate cigarillos, the tobacco industry is targeting youth, and misleading them to believe that flavored tobacco products are more safe than other tobacco products; and

WHEREAS, With colorful packaging, sweet flavors, and cheap prices, these products are often hard to distinguish from the candy displays they are often sold near, and tobacco industry representatives have even been quoted as saying that flavored tobacco products "are for someone who likes the taste of candy, if you know what I'm saying"; and

WHEREAS, Flavored tobacco products make it easier to start using tobacco and harder to quit. Eighty percent of youth tobacco users started with a flavored product, and eighty percent of youth and young adult users say they would quit if flavored tobacco products were unavailable; and

WHEREAS, Recent data shows that traditional cigarette smoking is increasing among Chicago's Black male high school students and that smoking rates remain high among Black young adults; and

WHEREAS, There has been no decline in the use of cigars by Black male high school students in Chicago in a decade, while rates are declining among white and Latinx students; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, Chicago's lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth are using tobacco at rates up to 5.6 times greater than heterosexual students; and

WHEREAS, Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health have found that the tobacco industry employs "a deliberate strategy to recruit and addict young smokers by adjusting menthol to create a milder experience for the first-time smoker"; and

WHEREAS, Approximately half of young adult smokers in Chicago use menthol cigarettes, and research shows that menthol cigarettes have slowed efforts to reduce smoking rates; and

WHEREAS, Research on tobacco industry tactics shows that menthol cigarettes are more heavily advertised and stocked and are sold for cheaper prices in majority African American neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, The tobacco industry has deliberately targeted menthol cigarettes at African Americans since

World War II; and

WHEREAS, Chicago's Black and brown communities are the most severely impacted by tobacco use. Black and brown neighborhoods have by far the most tobacco-related deaths, with tobacco-related diseases accounting for two years of the nine-year racial life expectancy gap; and

WHEREAS, Tobacco use makes poverty worse. Smoking a pack of cigarettes a day in Chicago costs \$4,500 a year, and smokers pay \$21,000 more for healthcare over a lifetime and miss more work to stay home sick; and

WHEREAS, Chicago has fallen behind in protecting its communities from tobacco use. While Chicago was once lauded as a pioneer for passing the first menthol cigarette-inclusive flavored tobacco ban in the world, our current flavored tobacco ban within 500 feet of high schools applies to only 6% of retailers, and today, at least 250 cities have more stringent flavored tobacco restrictions than Chicago, and

WHEREAS, Expanding Chicago's ban on flavored tobacco to cover the entire City would put us on par with other cities and keep young people from gaining access to flavored tobacco through the large number of retailers now selling it; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this ninth day of September, 2020, emphatically state our dedication to continuing to work on crafting and enacting legislation to ban the sale of all flavored tobacco products citywide, including menthol cigarettes.