

**FDA Nicotine Reduction Plan Announced Today Has Promise, But Timeline for
Implementation Puts Young Lives at Risk
Statement of Robin Koval, CEO & President, Truth Initiative**

We applaud U.S Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Scott Gottlieb for his plan to reduce death and disease by moving forward with a comprehensive policy towards nicotine. We concur with his conclusion that reducing the addictiveness and appeal of combustible tobacco products such as cigarettes is a cornerstone of protecting the public health. We also agree that protecting kids from *all* nicotine products is a priority.

However, the timeline laid out by the agency is far too long. We have long-supported a harm-minimization policy, where properly regulated non-combustible products have a path to market that will help smokers completely switch from the most deadly, combustible products to the least harmful products. That needs to happen sooner rather than later.

The four-year delay in fully regulating newly deemed combustible products will leave tens of millions of youth and young adults subject to the enticing flavors and marketing of little cigars, cigarillos and hookah. The five-year delay in regulating e-cigarettes and other non-combustible nicotine-based tobacco products will maintain confusion amongst smokers about the quality and safety of devices while leaving products and flavors marketed to kids on the market. While the FDA has said it will mitigate these risks through product standards, we have yet to see any concrete proposals.

We have also consistently supported a ban on menthol and other flavors in cigarettes and other combustible tobacco products and are disappointed that the FDA is merely requesting more information about flavors, including menthol in cigarettes. The FDA requested information on this issue four years ago and conducted research regarding menthol but has yet to act. The evidence is clear: removing menthol from cigarettes will improve public health, and the ongoing delay of enacting a menthol ban is discouraging for the other efforts being made to protect the public health, such as nicotine reduction in combustible tobacco products.

Ultimately, while we are strongly supportive of the goals set forth by Commissioner Gottlieb today, our optimism is tempered by the ongoing delays in implementing measures that will have an impact on the death and disease caused by tobacco. As Commissioner Gottlieb noted today, thousands of lives are on the line every day. The time for action is now, not years down the road.

About Truth Initiative

Truth Initiative is a national public health organization that is inspiring tobacco-free lives and building a culture where all youth and young adults reject tobacco. The truth about tobacco and the tobacco industry are at the heart of our proven-effective and nationally recognized truth[®] public-education campaign, our rigorous and scientific research and policy studies, and our innovative community and youth engagement programs supporting populations at high risk of using tobacco. The Washington, D.C.-based organization, formerly known as Legacy, was

established and funded through the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement between attorneys general from 46 states, five U.S. territories and the tobacco industry. To learn more about our work speaking, seeking and spreading the truth about tobacco, visit truthinitiative.org.