
Truth Initiative Applauds FDA Decision on Big Tobacco's Menthol E-Cigarette Products

Statement of Robin Koval, CEO and President, Truth Initiative

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 25, 2023) – [Truth Initiative](#) applauds the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) decision to issue marketing denial orders (MDOs) for two of R.J. Reynolds Vapor Company's menthol e-cigarette products, Vuse Vibe Tank Menthol 3.0% and Vuse Ciro Cartridge Menthol 1.5%. This announcement by FDA Center for Tobacco Products (CTP) Director Dr. Brian King shows that sound science is prevailing, and that the FDA is taking much needed steps to protect youth and young adults from these highly addictive products. We encourage the FDA to continue to accelerate this progress and complete its review of all remaining e-cigarette applications, including Reynolds' Vuse Alto which has a significant market share and is one of the most popular brands among teens. This decision also recognizes the indisputable role that menthol and all flavored tobacco products play in youth tobacco initiation and follows the FDA's similar marketing denial orders against two Logic brand menthol e-cigarette products issued in October of 2022.

Menthol – both on its own and in combination with nicotine – alters the nicotine receptors in the brain and can contribute to nicotine dependence. Menthol has also been shown to increase the intensity of nicotine's reinforcing effects and withdrawal symptoms, making it easier to start and harder to quit.

The most recent data from the 2022 National Youth Tobacco Survey indicated that 26.6% of middle and high school students who use flavored e-cigarettes use menthol. Findings [published in Tobacco Control](#) in July 2022 by CDC Foundation in collaboration with Truth Initiative show that [sales of e-cigarettes in "cooling" flavors](#) like menthol, ice, cool, frost, chill, or freeze rose by nearly 700%, and their U.S. market share doubled to 55% between 2017 and 2021, making the FDA's decision ever more critical and timely given the on-going youth e-cigarette epidemic.

As expected, following the FDA's announcement, R.J. Reynolds announced it will seek an immediate stay of enforcement despite the fact that the Company failed to provide sufficient scientific evidence in its applications to show that the potential benefit to adult smokers outweighs the risks of youth initiation and use. A playbook move that underscores the tobacco industry's hypocrisy and interference by wasting the FDA's time and taxpayers' money as it continues to put profits ahead of public health.



About Truth Initiative®

Truth Initiative is a national public health organization dedicated to achieving a culture where all young people reject smoking, vaping and nicotine and a future where tobacco and nicotine addiction are a thing of the past. In 2020, we celebrated 20 years of saving lives and preventing millions of youth from smoking. Our impact has helped drive the teen smoking rate down from 23% in 2000 to under 3% in 2021. The truth about tobacco and the tobacco industry are at the heart of our proven-effective and nationally recognized **truth**® public education campaign. As youth e-cigarette use threatens to addict a new generation to nicotine, we are leading the fight against tobacco and nicotine addiction in all forms. Our rigorous scientific research and policy studies, community and youth engagement programs supporting populations at high risk of using tobacco, and innovation in tobacco dependence treatment are also helping to end one of the most critical public health battles of our time. Based in Washington D.C., our organization, formerly known as the American Legacy Foundation, 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, visit truthinitiative.org.

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