



January 25, 2021

Testimony on SB 177 / HB 134
Fight Flavored Tobacco in Maryland

Position: Favorable

No Boundaries Coalition supports SB 177/HB 134.

SB 177/HB 134 is legislation that would end the sale of all flavored tobacco products in Maryland, including electronic smoking devices, menthol cigarettes, flavored cigars, and smokeless tobacco. We urge passage of a bill without amendments, free from the type of regulatory loopholes Big Tobacco has exploited for decades.

Flavored tobacco products lure kids into a life-long struggle with deadly addiction, hooking them on products in flavors like minty menthol, glazed donut, gummy bear, and cotton candy.

For decades, the tobacco industry has targeted Black and Brown communities with their predatory marketing of flavored tobacco products, namely menthol cigarettes. As a result, a staggering 85 percent of all African American smokers smoke menthol cigarettes, resulting in a disproportionate burden of tobacco-related disease and death. African Americans are more likely to die from tobacco-related causes than any other race or ethnic group.

The No Boundaries Coalition (the “Coalition”) is a resident-led advocacy organization building a unified and empowered Central West Baltimore (CWB) across the boundaries of race, class and neighborhoods. The No Boundaries Coalition is the largest grassroots organization in West Baltimore, with over 200 individual members. The Coalition mobilizes residents from seven different neighborhoods in 21217 to address racial and economic inequality in Baltimore City and improve the quality of life for Central West Baltimore residents. Currently, the Coalition is advocating for increased police accountability, safer streets, more opportunities for young people, increased voter turnout and more healthy foods in our neighborhoods.

The Faith & Community Against Flavored Tobacco coalition’s mission is to stop Big Tobacco from targeting Maryland’s children and Black and Brown communities.

To protect the health and futures of Maryland’s youth, we must end the sale of **all** flavored tobacco products in Maryland. [Urge Maryland legislators to vote yes on SB 177 and HB 134.](#)

Sincerely,

Councilman James Torrence, Board Member

“deconstructing boundaries, building commUNITY”

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