



# ANTI-DRUG COALITION

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**Contact:** Jodi Salvo, Tuscarawas County Anti-Drug Coalition Coordinator, 330-440-7319, [jisalvo@pfcs1.org](mailto:jisalvo@pfcs1.org)

## **ADC & TCHD Applaud FDA Commitment Recent Action Aimed at Saving Lives and Preventing Future Generations of Smokers**

(New Philadelphia, Ohio) – The Tuscarawas County Anti-Drug Coalition and the Tuscarawas County Health Department are applauding a commitment by the FDA to move forward with evidence-based actions aimed at saving lives and preventing future generations of smokers.

Recently, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced it is committing to advancing two tobacco product standards to significantly reduce disease and death from using combusted tobacco products, the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. Officials indicate that the FDA is working toward issuing proposed product standards within the next year to ban menthol as a characterizing flavor in cigarettes and ban all characterizing flavors (including menthol) in cigars; the authority to adopt product standards is one of the most powerful tobacco regulatory tools Congress gave the agency. This decision is based on clear science and evidence establishing the addictiveness and harm of these products and builds on important, previous actions that banned other flavored cigarettes in 2009.

*“This is a huge step forward in our prevention efforts here in Tuscarawas County,”* explained Tuscarawas County Anti-Drug Coalition Coordinator, Jodi Salvo. *“This move by the FDA will have a direct impact on the lives of our young people and aid in our efforts to bring to light the true dangers tobacco presents to our youth.”*

Studies show that menthol increases the appeal of tobacco and facilitates progression to regular smoking, particularly among youth and young adults by masking unpleasant flavors and harshness of tobacco products, making them easier to start using. Tobacco products with menthol can also be more addictive and harder to quit by enhancing the effects of nicotine.

*“We are excited about the FDA’s move to place a ban on menthol tobacco products and flavored cigars. We know that 90% of adult smokers started smoking as children, and the proposed ban addresses both youth initiation to tobacco products and health disparities in the populations where these tobacco products are most heavily marketed,”* added Autumn Poland, Health Educator with the Tuscarawas County Health Department.

If implemented, the FDA’s enforcement of any ban on menthol cigarettes and all flavored cigars will only address manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, importers and retailers. FDA officials indicate they are working diligently on the two issues with the next step being for the agency to publish proposed rules in the Federal Register to allow an opportunity for public comment. The FDA is working expeditiously on the two issues, and the next step will be for the agency to publish proposed rules in the Federal Register allowing an opportunity for public comment.

For free tobacco cessation services please contact: 1-800-QUIT NOW or 1-800-784-8669. For more information on local prevention efforts and resources visit [adctusc.org](http://adctusc.org).