

# PROTECT OHIO'S KIDS FROM BIG TOBACCO

In January, Governor DeWine stood up for the health of Ohio kids when he vetoed legislation that would have blocked cities from ending the sale of menthol cigarettes and candy-flavored tobacco products. Now, not quite six months later, the Ohio Senate's version of the next state budget includes a similar provision that again prevents communities from protecting their kids from intentional tobacco targeting.

This time around, the legislation is as deceptive as it is harmful. This new version claims to ban some e-cigarette flavors, but it contains loopholes. And by tying the hands of local communities that have made progress, it is a win for Big Tobacco companies that prey on our kids.

## WHAT DOES THIS LEGISLATION DO?

By nullifying local tobacco laws, the Senate legislation would roll back the steps local governments have taken to enforce state tobacco laws, including the 21-year-age requirement. This legislation would result in:

- **City councils overturned.** Local city councils have passed laws covering millions of Ohioans, trying to reign in retailers that continue selling to our kids. These local laws would be wiped out.
- **School policies voided.** Over 600 Ohio school systems have policies that prohibit tobacco use on school grounds and are proven to reduce youth tobacco use. These would be null and void.
- **Columbus legislation undone.** In 2022, Columbus fought hard to end the sale of flavored tobacco to counteract decades of aggressive marketing of menthol-flavored cigarettes and flavored products to kids, African Americans, Latinos and other groups. This legislation would be erased.

Governor DeWine spoke plainly when he issued his veto early this year, calling a press conference to declare, ***"We're dealing now with young people's lives. When a community wants to make the decision to ban these flavors to protect their children, we should applaud those decisions."***

This was no surprise to anyone who knows the governor's history on the issue. As a U.S. senator, he fought for years to give the FDA the authority to regulate tobacco products.

The Senate's budget proposal would allow tobacco companies to keep peddling their flavored poison to our most vulnerable residents, which is why tobacco companies are cheering it on. The Ohio House, Senate, and the governor have an opportunity to take the side of children's health over tobacco profits and reject this language. We respectfully urge them to do so.

### IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

American Cancer Society  
Cancer Action Network

American Heart Association

American Lung Association  
in Ohio

Association of Ohio Health  
Commissioners

Breathing Association

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

City of Reynoldsburg

Clark County Combined  
Health District

Cleveland Department of  
Public Health

Cleveland Lead Advocates  
for Safe Housing (CLASH)

Columbus Public Health

Groundwork Ohio

Kent City Health Department

Logan County Health District

Northeast Ohio Black  
Health Coalition

Ohio Chapter of the American  
College of Cardiology

Ohio Municipal League

Ohio Public Health Association

Ohio State Medical Association

Parents Against Vaping  
e-cigarettes (PAVe)

Preventing Tobacco Addiction  
Foundation / Tobacco 21

Prevention Action Alliance

PrimaryOne Health

The Academy of Medicine of  
Cleveland & Northern Ohio

The Ohio State University College  
of Public Health

Toledo-Lucas County  
Health Department

Wheeler Advisory Group, LLC

Williams County Combined  
Health District

Youngstown State University,  
Department of Graduate Studies  
in Health and Rehabilitation  
Sciences, Master of Public Health  
Program

Zanesville-Muskingum County  
Health Department