

Menthol Cigarette Ban Impact on Communities of Color

A menthol ban would run counter to progressive policing principles that build trust and legitimacy and would likely create an environment where communities of color would experience increased interaction with law enforcement leading to:

- Eroded trust in law enforcement
- Increased traffic stops and street stops in communities of color
- Increased likelihood the police will use force on a person of color

>1 IN 6

More than 1 in 6 Black and Latinx residents who were pulled over in a traffic stop or stopped on the street had similar interactions with police multiple times over the course of the year.¹

A menthol ban will make this situation worse.

Civil rights and law enforcement groups have said a crackdown on increased illegal sales resulting from a menthol ban would also strike communities of color.

“With a criminal legal system that incarcerates Blacks at nearly six times the rate of white Americans and a prison population that is 67% Black and Latinx, **any prohibition on menthol and flavored tobacco products promises continued over-criminalization and mass incarceration of people of color.**”²



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¹ Harrell and Davis, *Contacts Between Police and the Public*, 2018 (2020).

² American Civil Liberties Union et al, *Letter to the Honorable Frank Pallone*, (Feb. 24, 2020).