

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***National Coalition of Justice Practitioners (NCJP) Unite  
Against the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA)  
Proposed Ban on Menthol Cigarettes***

*Experts Ask Government for Racial Impact Study Before a Federal Menthol Ban*

**WASHINGTON, D.C. - Aug. 22, 2023** - The [National Coalition of Justice Practitioners \(NCJP\)](#), a group of Black and Hispanic law enforcement executives and experts, hosted the “*When Good People Write Bad Policy*” National Press Club panel event to educate people about the racial and criminal implications of a menthol ban. The panel met before the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) announcement anticipated to come this month.

“There are many groups who still do not understand the unintended consequences of this proposed ban,” said Dr. Benjamin Chavis, President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association and panel moderator. “For leaders in Washington to consider this ban without consulting Black and Brown officers is disastrous. Let’s sit down with the proponents and first conduct a Racial Impact Study. Targeting in the past doesn’t justify targeting now. We are against racial targeting and profiling. All of it.”

Panelists Commissioner Jiles Ship, Major Neill Franklin (Ret.), NYS Trooper Director Elliot Boyce (Ret.), Deputy Inspector Corey Pegues (Ret.), Captain Sonia Pruitt (Ret.), Lt. David Daniels III (Ret.), Chief John I. Dixon (Ret.) and Ron Hampton, DC Metro Police (Ret.) asked that President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris pull back on this menthol ban until further studies, like a Racial Impact Study, be done and more experts are heard.

The August 10 “[When Good People Write Bad Policy](#)” panel event urged lawmakers to study the effects of a menthol ban by launching a Racial Impact Study that gathers input from law enforcement, health experts, and Black and Latino communities.

The law enforcement experts listed these unintended consequences:

- Anything you ban becomes illegal, and it is a policing issue.
- Enforcement of the menthol ban will be in more urban and Latino communities and used as a tool in racial profiling, stop-and-frisk, and arrests.
- The police do not need another reason for a stop-and-frisk that leads to life-threatening casualties in the Black community.

Former Law Enforcement Action Partnership executive director, Retired Major Neill Franklin, stated, “Illicit markets breed violence. This menthol ban will flood the streets, especially Black & Latino communities, with unregulated products, and if you think the products are unhealthy now, wait until the unregulated products are pushed into our

communities. You don't want to see substances like fentanyl added to a street cigarette."

Overall, adult and youth smoking rates in the U.S. are the lowest they have ever been in public health history. Since over 80% of African Americans and 48% of Latinos who choose to smoke prefer menthol cigarettes, a proposed FDA ban is racially discriminatory since cigarettes preferred by White smokers will not be banned. There is no scientific basis to regulate menthol and non-menthol cigarettes differently. Health concerns are more effectively managed through education, treatment, and counseling, not by police.

The proposed U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) ban on menthol cigarettes could be announced this month.

Learn more about the implications of a menthol ban and ask leaders in Washington for a Racial Impact Study [http://ncjp.info/menthol\\_ban\\_detail.cfm?banID=21](http://ncjp.info/menthol_ban_detail.cfm?banID=21).

[Watch the panel event here.](#) [See photos from the event here.](#)

### **ABOUT THE NATIONAL COALITION OF JUSTICE PRACTITIONERS (NCJP)**

The NCJP is a national coalition of diverse law enforcement and justice practitioners dedicated to respect for the rule of law and order in the fair administration of justice. The NCJP is comprised of independent justice practitioners who are also members of the New York State Grand Council of Guardians (GCGNY), NYPD Guardians, National Latino Officers Association (NLOA), Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP), National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice (NABCJ), National Association of Black Law Enforcement Officers (NABLEO), Newark Bronze Shields, NYS Coalition of Black State Troopers, and National Organization of Retired State Troopers (NORST). For More Information, visit [www.ncjp.info](http://www.ncjp.info)

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