

RESOLUTION TO RESTRICT YOUTH ACCESS TO FLAVORED TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Whereas, lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in the United States;

Whereas, American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) of the Northern Plains have significantly higher death rates from lung cancer than do Whites in this region;

Whereas, more than 90% of deaths from lung cancer are caused by cigarette smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke;

Whereas, AI/AN youth and adults have the highest prevalence of cigarette smoking among all racial/ethnic groups in the U.S.;

Whereas, smoking prevalence among American Indians is highest in the Northern Plains region;

Whereas, tobacco companies have targeted American Indian/Alaska Native communities through extensive promotions, sponsorships, and advertising campaigns including the marketing of commercial tobacco as a natural product that is part of our cultural heritage;

Whereas, tobacco companies continue to market heavily to AI/AN communities while also specifically marketing to children with youth-appealing packaging and additives such as candy, fruit and desert flavorings;

Whereas, in a further effort to addict people to cigarettes, tobacco companies add menthol to cigarettes to mask the harshness of tobacco smoke to children;

Whereas, menthol flavored products, often the first tobacco products sampled by children, mask the harshness of tobacco smoke, leading to increased likelihood of addiction;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Duluth Indigenous Commission, in an effort to decrease the rates of tobacco addiction and therefore lung cancer in our community, supports current efforts to reduce access to products such as menthol and other flavored tobacco products that appeal specifically to children and urge the Duluth City Council to restrict the sale of menthol and other flavored tobacco products to adult only tobacco stores within the city.