

**Public Statement
Interagency Meeting on Smoking and Health: Youth Cessation Research
October 15, 2020**

My name is Jennifer Folkenroth and I'm the National Senior Director of Tobacco Programs at the American Lung Association.

The Lung Association is committed to eliminating tobacco use and tobacco-related disease. Data shows that over 30% of high school students reported using a tobacco product in 2019.¹ It is clear more must be done to halt the number of youth initiating tobacco use; the Lung Association is committed to ensuring the full and robust implementation of the Tobacco Control Act, including halting the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including mint and menthol.

But in the meantime, millions of kids are addicted to tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. Proven and effective treatments to help the kids that are addicted to nicotine quit are urgently needed. The federal government should fund studies on quitting all tobacco products among black and brown youth, LGBTQ+ youth and rural youth – including e-cigarettes, cigarettes, cigars and smokeless tobacco. Our entire community, including government agencies, public health organizations, researchers, teachers, parents and others must do more to work together. There needs to be more treatments under development, more clinical trials that are sizable enough to extrapolate the results onto the broader population and more widespread adoption of counseling programs that we know help kids quit. Medicaid, CHIP and private insurance should cover these tobacco cessation counseling services for kids.

In addition to our policy and advocacy efforts, the Lung Association also has programs aimed at helping youth quit. Our Not on Tobacco (N-O-T) gives youth ages 14 to 19 a voluntary cessation program designed for teens and their quit journey.

Preventing more kids from starting to use tobacco products must happen, but we need to look to find solutions and treatment to help the kids that are currently addicted quit for good. Thank you for your time.

¹https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/youth_data/tobacco_use/index.htm#:~:text=All%20Tobacco%20Product%20Use&text=Many%20young%20people%20use%20two,in%20the%20past%2030%20days.