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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Robert M Finley MS Youth Call for a Reduction of Tobacco Marketing!

Glen Cove Robert M. Finley Middle School students joined their peers at the HS by taking a stand for the “Great American Smoke Out 2017” (GASO) to call attention to the need to reduce their exposure to tobacco marketing through awareness activities organized by the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition School Committee-Chaired by Peter Cardone, Director of Health Physical Education and Athletics for Glen Cove School District.

GASO is a day of national activism sponsored by the American Cancer Society. Each year, the “Great American Smoke Out” draws attention to preventing the deaths and chronic diseases caused by smoking and has been a catalyst in the late 1980s and 1990s for legislation discouraging teen cigarette use, and the social norms associated with the acceptability of smoking. Per Mr. Cardone “This day of national recognition empowers youth to stand out, speak up and seize control against “Big Tobacco”. About 40 million Americans still smoke cigarettes, and tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the world.

The School Committee is pleased to once again be partnering with the Tobacco Action Coalition of LI, and their “Seen Enough Tobacco” campaign to reduce our youth’s exposure to tobacco marketing. Tobacco marketing has been declared a youth epidemic by former Surgeon General Benjamin, so today we are encouraged to see our next generation step up and call for a reduction in youth’s exposure to tobacco marketing”, said Dr. Sharon Harris-Executive Director of SAFE. Nicotine addiction is very bad for our general health. She continued, “It is lethal, and often referred to as a brain “wanting” disease which can never be cured however can be fully arrested. It binds the brain dopamine pathways just like other illegal drugs, meth, alcohol, heroin and etc. It prepares the brain to send false message about the need of nicotine to the body as necessary, similar to other survival activities like eating and drinking food and liquids.”

“Based on the volumes of research and data the most important thing we can do for our youth is make them aware of the dangers, teach them about Point-of Sale tobacco marketing practices, the necessary skills to avoid taking their first puff and how to advocate for themselves. The tobacco industry places most of their advertising in stores where 75 percent of teens shop at least once per week. Further, stores located near schools contain 3x the amount of these advertisements which are all prominently displayed in our children’s purview”, according to Carol Meschkow- TAC Manager. She pointed out that, “This program was very timely as the students were informed of the Tobacco Companies’ yearlong Corrective Statement Advertisements, and how this relates to deceptive marketing campaigns, and what they have been learning about the impact of the Tobacco Marketing at their purview in the local retail establishments”.

Health Teachers Amanda Sullivan and Matt Carbone’s classes had their students actively engaged the program in recognition of GASO to call their attention to the alarming amount of tobacco marketing they are exposed to, and to make them aware of the Tobacco Industries RICO Violations and efforts to defraud the public on the health effects of smoking and their marketing to children, and the subsequent court ordered Corrective Statements. The Students were educated on the dangers of tobacco products and the marketing tactics the tobacco industry uses in their local retailers. Per Health teachers Ms. Sullivan and Mr. Carbone “The youths

enjoyed the interactive learning program with materials supplied by TAC of LI. The program taught necessary life skills in advocacy to take a stand against “Big Tobacco”. To conclude the lesson the class completed youth comment cards pledging to call for a reduction in tobacco marketing in their local retail stores, and were going to share the messages learned with their friends and families. Lastly, and very significantly they challenged smokers to “Quit” for the day.

For more information about SAFE, Inc. and the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition visit the website at <http://www.safeglencove.org> or our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition> or call [516-676-2008](tel:516-676-2008). For more information about TAC and the dangers of tobacco use visit: www.tobaccofreenystate.org. For Quit help call: 1-866-NY-Quits.