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FOR IMMEDIATE

RELEASE

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: New York State Department of Health Announces Decline in Adult Smoking Rate to All-Time Low

New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) just released a report based on data from the 2020 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), an annual statewide telephone survey of adults developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and administered by NYS DOH.

The States' Health Commissioner Dr. Mary T. Bassett announced that the adult cigarette smoking rate in New York State achieved a new low of 12 percent in 2020, a rate lower than the U.S. average of 15.5 percent. Among young adults, ages 18 to 24, the smoking rate is even lower, at 5.5 percent. These successes are believed to be due, in part, to the progress made by Department of Health's Tobacco Control Program, which aims to prevent youth tobacco use, promotes tobacco cessation services and change norms about use ad health.

Key BRFSS demonstrated that:

- The prevalence of adult smoking in 2020 is 12.0%. Between 2017 and 2020 the prevalence of adult smoking decreased by 15%. This rate has dropped consecutively over the past four years.
- Adult smoking rates remain highest among adults enrolled in Medicaid (22.9%); adults who are unemployed (20.2%); adults with an annual household income of less than \$25,000 (20.0%); adults reporting frequent mental distress (19.7%); adults with less than a HS education (19.0%); and adults living with disability (17.4%).
- The smoking rate among young adults (18-24 years of age) has reached a new low of 5.5%.

Sadly, despite these achievements' tobacco use remains a significant public health issue. Disease caused by smoking and secondhand-hand smoke are responsible for killing more than 22,000 people each year in the State. Additionally, 650,000 adults live with a chronic disease caused by smoking. Further, 1.7 million New York adults still smoke cigarettes, many youth and adults use other tobacco products, including, cigars, smokeless tobacco, and electronic cigarettes. Despite downward trends in cigarette use New York youth and young adults remain the primary users of e-cigarettes and vape pens.

Large disparities among people who still smoke and who use tobacco remain as well, with tobacco use disproportionately affecting communities inundated by the tobacco industry, which spends billions of dollars in the U.S. every year marketing its deadly products. New York's smoking rates are highest among adults who are enrolled in Medicaid, who are unemployed, have lower income, who report frequent mental distress, have less than a high school education, or who live with a disability.

New York State Smokers' Quitline assists thousands of New Yorkers every year in their attempts to break free from smoking and other tobacco use by providing information, expert quit coaching, support, and free starter kits of nicotine replacement therapy The service is free and confidential. Call 1-866-NYQUITS (1-866-697-8487), text 716-

309-4688, or visit the New York State Smokers' Quitline at <https://www.nysmokefree.com/> for more information or to speak with a Quit Coach.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. Its Coalition is concerned about tobacco use and vaping seeking to educate and update the community regarding its negative consequences in collaboration with Carol Meschkow, Manager- Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit the Vaping Facts and Myths Page of SAFE's website to learn more about how vaping is detrimental to your health www.safeglencove.org.