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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: Tobacco Retail Stores Now Required to Post Health Warnings

The New York State Department of Health recently announced a big victory for the public. The Tobacco Industry Corrective Statements describing the health effects and addictiveness of smoking started appearing in most tobacco retailers stores throughout the state this summer and are required to be in place for 21 months starting this summer. Last year, the U.S. Department of Justice announced the resolution of a civil racketeering lawsuit against the largest U.S. cigarette companies. The court order imposed the signage as the last of several corrective remedies ordered by the court since 2017, including several advertisements that were required to run in newspapers and on television, and statements that were attached on cigarette packs.

According to the court order, the corrective statements must be in highly visible locations within the stores, and are designed to be eye-catching and provide truthful information to consumers related to the adverse health effects of smoking; the addictiveness of smoking and nicotine; the lack of health benefits from cigarettes advertised as light or low tar; cigarette companies' manipulation of cigarette design and composition to ensure optimum nicotine delivery; and the adverse health effects of exposure to secondhand smoke.

The corrective statements include the following facts:

- Smoking cigarettes causes numerous diseases and on average 1,200 American deaths every day;
- The nicotine in cigarettes is highly addictive. Cigarettes have purposely been designed to create and sustain addiction;
- So-called light, low-tar and natural cigarettes are just as harmful as regular cigarettes; and
- Secondhand smoke causes disease and death in people who do not smoke.

The tobacco companies fought these point-of-sale corrective action statements in court for 16 years. The lawsuit was filed in 1999 in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. In a landmark 2006 judgement, the court found that the cigarette companies had violated civil racketeering laws (RICO) and engaged in a decades-long conspiracy to deceive the American public about the health effects of smoking and their marketing to children. The order relates to defendants Altria, Philip Morris USA Inc. (PM USA) and R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company (RJRT) as well as to four cigarette brands owned by ITG Brands LLC (ITG).

NY State Health Commissioner maintains the court ordered corrective statements appearing at retailers are long overdue and will support the mission of reducing smoking-related illness such as cancer and heart disease. Further, these corrective statements are blunt, well-established truths about the dangers and addictive power of smoking. Big tobacco is not your friend, we are your friend, if you want to quit smoking call 1-866-NY-QUITS.

The goals and objectives of the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition draw on a community-wide approach to change community norms, values, and policies about alcohol, tobacco and substance abuse that foster consistent

standards for behavior and the need for prevention. The organization has been employing environmental strategies, education and resources in collaboration with Carol Meschkow, Manager- Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island their long-standing technical partner in conjunction with the Glen Cove Middle School Health Education classes and the Youth Bureau's After 3 Program to impart to the City's youth the dire need to reduce tobacco marketing and to shed a light on the industries misleading marketing strategies.

Last year, the Coalition's Community Committee embarked on an effort to draft and propose a new law restricting incoming stores to B2 District areas as strong and effective laws and regulations were needed to protect youth from deadly addiction by reducing access to tobacco, vaping products and other drug paraphernalia. With the assistance of the City Attorney, Tip Henderson, that effort came to successful fruition in July at the City Council meeting whereby the proposed law was passed unanimously.

For information on how to quit smoking or vaping tobacco or nicotine, the [New York State Smokers' Quitline](#) provides free and confidential services that include information, tools, quit coaching, and support in both English and Spanish. Services are available by calling 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487), texting (716) 309-4688, or visiting www.nysmokefree.com, for information, to chat online with a Quit Coach, or to sign up for [Learn2QuitNY](#), a six-week, step-by-step text messaging program to build the skills you need to quit any tobacco product. Individuals aged 13 to 24 can text "DropTheVape" to 88709 to receive age-appropriate quit assistance. The Department of Health continues to provide quitting and cessation support for youth and young adults to receive free, anonymous, and confidential texting services.

Please visit the American Lung Association on their Website at: www.americanlung.org. For help Quitting smoking/vaping or to help a loved one beat a Nicotine Addiction the American Lung Association is committed to helping educate, intervene, and prevent the use of tobacco and nicotine by the next generation. The Lung HelpLine, available via phone or online and is ready to assist teens between the ages of 13 -17 in quitting tobacco, including vaping. Call 800-LUNGUSA or chat online through their website at Lung.org. Individuals aged 13 to 24 can text "DropTheVape" to 88709 to receive age-appropriate quit assistance. The Department of Health continues to provide quitting and cessation support for youth and young adults to receive free, anonymous, and confidential texting services.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. The Coalition is concerned about all combustible and electronic products with marijuana and tobacco. The Agency is employing environmental strategies to educate and update the community regarding the 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 www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or to learn more about electronic products visit the Vaping Facts and Myths and the "LIVE SAFE" pages of SAFE's website to learn more about how vaping is detrimental to your health www.safeglencove.org.