Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee

Menthol Cigarettes and Public Health:
Review of the Scientific Evidence and Recommendations

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Final edits from the July 21, 2011 meeting are included.
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This report was written by the Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee (TPSAC) of the Center for Tobacco Products of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). TPSAC was mandated by the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act to deliver a report to FDA on the public health impact of menthol in cigarettes within a year of the committee's formation establishment. The report was written within the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, which governs the committee's meetings. During 10 meetings, from March 30–31, 2010 through March 17–18, 2011 (see Appendix B for dates and topics covered), TPSAC and its Menthol Report Subcommittee developed an approach to the task of writing the report, wrote and reviewed draft chapters, reached conclusions and drafted recommendations. Chapters were discussed in meetings of the full committee and there was opportunity for comment.

During this process, TPSAC received valuable input from many public commenters, including researchers, tobacco industry, consultants to the tobacco industry, representatives of the public health sector, and others. The tobacco industry also responded to requests from TPSAC for specific materials. The voting members of TPSAC received useful comments from the non-voting members of the committee; TPSAC acknowledges their collegial input.

Many others provided materials that were considered by TPSAC in writing the report. TPSAC is grateful to contractors to FDA from the University of California, San Francisco, and RTI International who reviewed various sources and prepared reports for TPSAC on a very timely basis. David Mendez, PhD, from the University of Michigan School of Public Health, executed modeling to assist TPSAC in characterizing the public health impact of menthol cigarettes. Lisa Henriksen, PhD, from Stanford University School of Medicine, made a strong and timely contribution to the development of Chapter 5. TPSAC appreciates the efforts of these two scientists, which were made on a very demanding schedule. TPSAC also thanks Denise Gellene, who edited this report and met the challenges posed by the deadline.

In submitting this report, TPSAC has met the requirement of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act with regard to developing this report and making recommendations on the public health impact of menthol in cigarettes. Of course, TPSAC would be pleased to offer further guidance to FDA on this topic in the future, if needed.