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CONTACT: Dr. Sharon Harris 516- 676-2008

safeglencove@yahoo.com

SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: The Tobacco Industry and the Retail Environment

According to a recent report from The Truth Initiative, tobacco companies rely on the retail environment to reach both current and future customers by advertising their products and normalizing the presence of tobacco products in daily life. Strong restrictions on advertising, discounting, promoting, and selling tobacco in the retail environment are critical to prevent initiation, encourage quitting, protect young people, and mitigate the impact of tobacco marketing for groups who have been disproportionately targeted.

This report reviews the science around marketing in the retail environment and the massive impact it has on driving tobacco use, particularly among youth and young adults. It examines how state and local governments have spearheaded innovative solutions to mitigate this impact and highlights endgame policies that restrict points of sale.

The industry's investment in marketing in the retail environment reveals the importance it places on this sales mechanism. The tobacco industry spent almost \$9.5 billion marketing its cigarette, smokeless tobacco, and e-cigarette products in 2021, the most recent year with data for all three categories. Almost \$9.1 billion (or 95.6%) of that was spent on marketing in the retail environment that year, amounting to over \$1 million every hour.

It is a financially sound decision for the tobacco industry to invest in the retail environment. When discounts and promotions are advertised in stores, tobacco product sales go up by as much as 30%. This is associated with impulse purchases of tobacco products. Cigarette displays at the point-of-sale tempt smokers to buy tobacco, even among customers not intending to do so and smokers trying to quit. Research of adult daily smokers found unintended cigarette purchases were made by 22% of study participants, and point-of-sale displays caused nearly four times as many unplanned purchases as planned purchases. Other research found that 11.3% of cigarette pack buying was described as unplanned. Young adults ages 18-24 were more likely to make unplanned cigarette pack purchases. These impulse purchases are sometimes made instead of planned purchases on items like food and other living necessities.

Retail marketing and in-store advertising and displays are also associated with compromising quit attempts. Researchers who interviewed smokers who had attempted to quit in the last six months found that the high visibility of tobacco product advertising in-store was extremely tempting and stymied cessation attempts and that higher exposure to in-store advertising and price promotion

at the point-of-sale was associated with a lower probability of successful quitting among adult smokers.

Exposure to e-cigarette advertising in the retail environment is also associated with compromising cigarette smoking cessation. A study of 18- to 29-year-old current cigarette smokers found that exposure to e-cigarette product displays was associated with lowered odds of cigarette smoking abstinence at a six-month follow-up. A survey of young adult smokers found that one in three reported that frequent exposure to tobacco advertising made it difficult to quit.

Research shows point-of-sale marketing is more prevalent in communities with a greater number of low-income residents and groups that have been economically and socially marginalized, and it is more effective in garnering the attention of these communities and populations.

A study of adult current smokers found that those with incomes below the poverty level were more likely to notice in-store tobacco promotions and ads and were more than twice as likely to purchase a tobacco product due to a special price promotion. Black or Hispanic individuals have higher odds of reporting exposure to tobacco advertising than those who are White. Researchers maintain this phenomenon is not limited to cigarettes – geographic, socioeconomic, and racial and ethnic disparities also exist for exposure to e-cigarette advertising in the retail environment.

The Truth Initiative is the nation's largest nonprofit public health organization dedicated to preventing youth and young adult nicotine addiction and empowering quitting. Research is conducted through the Truth Initiative Schroeder Institute that produces independent research to provide evidence for policy change and leadership in cessation research. For more information, please visit www.truthinitiative.org.

Keep aware, stay informed and avoid unhealthy behaviors. "Live SAFE". The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition works diligently to protect youth and inform parents through prevention education to avoid the negative consequence of nicotine addiction.

SAFE, Inc. is the only alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and education agency in the City of Glen Cove. The Coalition is concerned with all combustible and electronic products with tobacco. The Agency employs environmental strategies to educate and update the community regarding the negative consequences of smoking and vaping. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or to learn more about electronic products visit the Youth and Tobacco Use and Vaping Facts and Myths Pages of SAFE's website to learn more about how vaping is detrimental to your health at www.safeglencove.org.