



**TESTIMONY OF
GREATER BRIDGEPORT BRANCH NAACP
BY: REV. D STANLEY LORD, PRESIDENT
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Monday, February 1, 2021**

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**SB 326, An Act Prohibiting The Sale Of Flavored Cigarettes, Tobacco Products,
Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems And Vapor Products**

The Greater Bridgeport Branch National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (GBNAACP) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony on SB 326, An Act Prohibiting The Sale Of Flavored Cigarettes, Tobacco Products, Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems And Vapor Products. **The GBNAACP strongly supports this bill.**

Before addressing this bill, we must visit the long history of advocacy, fighting and speaking truth to power by the NAACP. Since 1909 the NAACP has been at the forefront of fighting for Civil Rights, Justice and Equality for the Black & Brown Community.

For more than 60 years, Big Tobacco has strategically and successfully targeted the Black & Brown Community with menthol cigarettes – which science has shown are even more addictive and harder to quit than regular cigarettes. Through these long-standing predatory practices, the tobacco industry has profited enormously while disproportionately destroying Black lives and health. Roughly 45,000 Black & Brown Americans die at the hands of Big Tobacco every single year.

Although we in the African American community usually smoke fewer cigarettes and start smoking at an older age, we suffer the greatest burden of tobacco-related mortality of any racial or ethnic group in the United States. And during the pandemic, such troubling health disparities have only gotten worse. When African Americans are disproportionately dying, we cannot just sit by. Now is the time for action. I urge you to pass this bill.

We need to end the tobacco industry's exploitation of Black lives for profit by eliminating flavored tobacco products – including menthol cigarettes, flavored e-cigarettes, flavored cigars, flavored hookah, and flavored smokeless tobacco. We want our youth to be able to grow up healthy and strong, but if we continue to allow these products in our communities the future looks dim for this generation. To that end, we support this important legislation. We look forward to working with you to make sure that our youth are protected from these poisonous products.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our position.

For additional information contact GBNAACP at 203-296-1400.