Optimizing a product standard for banning menthol and other flavors in tobacco products

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Abstract
In this paper, we highlight key issues that policymakers should consider when developing a product standard banning menthol and other flavors in tobacco products based on research evidence and experiences learned from other countries. A flavor product standard may be optimized by (1) having a clear and comprehensive definition of flavor that includes a complete ban on additives that have flavor properties and/or evoke sensory/cooling effects (i.e., menthol analogues and synthetic coolants that stimulate the cooling receptor of the brain) rather than only as a “characterizing flavor”, and (2) applying the standard to all tobacco product categories as well as all components or parts of the tobacco product (i.e., the tobacco, filter, wrapper, or paper), including separate flavorings that can be added to the product.

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