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### **Public-Private Partnership Yields Unique, Versatile Toolkit to Combat Black-Market Vapor Products that Endanger Public Health and Safety**

**WASHINGTON, DC, [January 14, 2021]** – The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) and the National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR Center) are proud to release an innovative toolkit as part of their joint campaign, *Promoting Public Health and Safety*. This public-private partnership seeks to educate law enforcement, community leaders, and adult consumers about the serious consequences of counterfeit and other illicit vapor products and provides tools to combat these illegal activities.

“We are especially proud to announce this public-private partnership at a time when consumers are being targeted by scammers everywhere they turn. Together, we can combat the dangers of illicit vapor products through awareness and education,” said NCPC President and CEO Ann M. Harkins.

*Addressing Black-Market Vapor Products: A Toolkit for Law Enforcement and Community Leaders* is a media-enriched online resource that provides information and resources to promote public safety and support enforcement against counterfeit and other black-market vapor products. This includes information on illicit product types, the negative consequences of black-market vapor products, and best practices to combat this growing risk to public health, the economy, and community safety.

“As a 30-year law enforcement veteran who has spent the past eight supervising intellectual property crime cases where we have seen an increase in black-market vapor products in the Los Angeles marketplace, I view the *Addressing Black Market Vapor Products* toolkit as a comprehensive ‘one-stop shop’ to facilitate stakeholder engagement,” said Lt. Geff Deedrick of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department. “It doesn’t matter what role you play in law enforcement; this toolkit has applications that will empower you to make a positive impact in your community.”

Black-market vapor products undermine critical tobacco-control measures adopted in the past year by Congress and the Food and Drug Administration to address underage use. Because these illicit products often are sold online with little to no age-verification or through social sourcing outside of traditional retail channels, like in-person dealers, they are easier for youth to access. They also can be marketed in youth-appealing flavors and packaging. Moreover, black-market vapor products present additional health and safety risks for adult consumers, given the unsanitary conditions in which they are manufactured and unknown and untested ingredients

they may contain. And as we saw last year with cases of vaping-related lung injuries, such black-market products may contain illicit substances, like THC, and can have serious public-health consequences.

To address this growing black-market of vapor products effectively, collaboration is critical across stakeholders. This public awareness and education campaign and corresponding toolkit will be a valuable resource among federal and state law enforcement and adult community leaders.

“The IPR Center is committed to working with its federal and industry partners to identify, interdict, and investigate individuals, companies, and criminal organizations engaging in the illegal importation of products that threaten the health and safety of the American public,” said IPR Center Director Steve Francis.

This partnership not only will aid in prevention, but enhance enforcement such as the recent seizure by FDA and CBP of 42 shipments of counterfeit and unauthorized e-cigarettes (33,681 units worth ~\$719k) at Dallas Fort Worth International Airport.

“Protecting American consumers from illicit and especially harmful tobacco products, such as counterfeit or flavored e-cigarettes, is of utmost importance to the FDA,” said Judy McMeekin, Pharm.D., FDA Associate Commissioner for Regulatory Affairs in FDA’s January 13, 2021 [news release](#) about the seizure. “We will continue to investigate and remove from the marketplace products that pose a particular danger to the public health.”

Learn more about this important NCPIC-IPR Center effort to protect adult consumers from the risks of illicit vapor products at [www.ncpc.org/PublicHealthandSafety](http://www.ncpc.org/PublicHealthandSafety).

Remember to keep all vapor products -- authentic ones and fakes -- out of the reach of those under 21 years of age.

### **About National Crime Prevention Council**

The National Crime Prevention Council is the nonprofit leader in crime prevention. Since 1980, we have delivered easy-to-use crime prevention tips that protect what matters most—you, your family, and your community. NCPIC’s public service advertising campaigns have generated more than \$2 billion in donated media. NCPIC distributes crime prevention messages to its network of nearly 15,000 state and local law enforcement agencies, crime prevention associations, community groups, foundations, and corporate partners who reach millions in communities across the country. For more information on how NCPIC can be a public safety expert for you or how to "Take A Bite Out of Crime®," visit [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org).

### **About National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center**

The National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center, working collaboratively with its public and private sector partners, stands at the forefront of the United States government’s response to combatting global intellectual property theft and enforcing intellectual properties rights violations. The IPR Center was established to combat global intellectual property theft – and, accordingly, has a significant role policing the sale and distribution of counterfeit goods on websites, social media, and the dark web.

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