

Poll shows strong support among Black voters for menthol ban

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Black voters support a ban on menthol cigarettes by a wide margin,

refuting claims that such a ban would be strongly opposed by Black Americans, a new survey shows.

Black voters support by a 37-point margin the menthol ban proposed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, with 62% in favor and 25% against.

That's even greater than the 29-point margin by which all voters support the ban, with 58% in favor and 29% against.

Implementing the rule would not harm President Joe Biden's chances of re-election, the [poll](#) found. There was no change in Biden's overall standing after voters were asked to assume his administration ended the sale of [menthol cigarettes](#).

"There is clear evidence that the menthol rule has no meaningful electoral impact," concluded [The Mellman Group](#), a leading political research firm that conducted the poll on behalf of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free kids.

In December 2023, the Biden administration announced it was delaying until March a long-planned ban on menthol cigarettes.

The ban had been opposed by some civil rights leaders with ties to Big Tobacco, who argued it would give police an excuse to target Black smokers.

Media reports said that a poll commissioned by tobacco giant Altria also influenced the administration's decision to delay the ban.

The Altria poll, presented to the administration but never publicly released, claimed that the menthol rule would turn off "Biden's core voters," defined as non-white voters and non-conservative white voters

under 45.

The new poll asked respondents an initial presidential horse-race question between Biden and former President Donald Trump. Biden had a two-point lead over Trump, 44% to 42%.

When asked to assume Biden went through with the ban, those polled still gave Biden a two-point lead over Trump, 45% to 43%.

"These [poll results](#) demonstrate that voters, especially Black voters, strongly support eliminating menthol cigarettes, and they debunk the tobacco industry myth that moving forward will be a political liability," [Yolonda Richardson](#), president and CEO of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, said in a news release from the organization.

"The Biden Administration must issue a final rule without further delay," Richardson continued. "There is no other single action the Administration can take that would do more to advance health equity and help achieve the goals of the President's Cancer Moonshot."

Biden's margin among Black voters remained unchanged at 58 points (74% for Biden and 16% for Trump) even after respondents were asked to assume the menthol rule had gone into effect.

"This new data proves what we already know to be true—Black voters want to see a menthol ban," said [Derrick Johnson](#), president and CEO of the NAACP.

Biden's margin among 18- to 29-year-olds actually increased by two points, to 56% for Biden and 27% for Trump, assuming implementation of the ban.

"Now, it's time for the Biden administration to put people over profits

and swiftly enact a rule that will save countless Black lives," Johnson said. "We're done waiting. The NAACP will continue to do everything in its power to hold this Administration accountable to their promises to our community. Enough is enough. Our lives are at stake."

The poll included 1,000 registered voters in the United States and an oversample of 400 interviews among Black voters. It was conducted Dec. 9-14, 2023, and the margin of error is plus or minus 3.1%.

More information: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has more about the [menthol ban](#).

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