

June 8, 2026

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Formula 1 Group
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United Kingdom

Mohammed Ben Sulayem, President
Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile
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Dear Mr. Domenicali and Mr. Ben Sulayem,

We, the undersigned Attorneys General of 19 states and jurisdictions, write to express our concerns regarding tobacco industry sponsorship of Formula 1 racing. After decades free from most tobacco advertising, young fans are now being exposed to prominent advertising for highly addictive nicotine pouches, such as Velo¹ from British American Tobacco² and Zyn³ from Philip Morris International/Swedish Match North America. Many young people attend races taking place in the United States, and many more watch from home via broadcasts, streaming, and social media. Given Formula 1's significant youth viewership and the danger of exposing young people to highly addictive and harmful nicotine products, we call on the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and Formula 1 to expand its existing policy prohibiting

¹ Velo is an Official Principal Partner of the McLaren Formula 1 Team. With McLaren's Lando Norris—a young and influential athlete with a sizable social media following of his own—as the 2025 World Drivers' Champion, Velo will be prominent in every McLaren photograph, race-recap, highlight video, and social media post. See McLaren Racing, *Lando Norris: 2025 World Drivers' Champion*, <https://www.mclaren.com/racing/team/lando-norris/2025-world-drivers-champion/> (last visited Mar. 23, 2026).

² Reynolds American Inc., the U.S.-based corporate parent of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, is a wholly owned subsidiary of British American Tobacco.

³ In December 2025, Zyn's partnership with Ferrari was expanded to include additional races and branding on Ferrari cars. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, currently a spokesperson for Pokémon, and Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton, who was named by SportsPro as 2025's most marketable athlete, will be cheered on by approximately 400 million Ferrari fans across the globe. See *Scuderia Ferrari HP Extends Its Partnership with Philip Morris International*, Ferrari (Dec. 3, 2025), <https://www.ferrari.com/en-EN/formula1/articles/scuderia-ferrari-hp-philip-morris>; Logan Fairbrother, *Charles Leclerc Discusses His Love for Pokémon*, HYPEBEAST (Feb. 8, 2026), <https://hypebeast.com/2026/2/charles-leclerc-pokemon-30th-anniversary-interview-info>; *Lewis Hamilton Named World's Most Marketable Athlete*, SPORTS PRO (Oct. 22, 2025), <https://www.sportspro.com/news/sponsorship-marketing/lewis-hamilton-50-most-marketable-athlete-sportspro-ranking-50mm-october-2025/>.

cigarette sponsorships to prohibit sponsorship involving all tobacco and nicotine products, including nicotine pouches, and to terminate all current sponsorships involving these products.

Attorneys General have a long history of protecting the public from the negative effects of exposure to tobacco products. Our offices sued the tobacco industry in the 1990s to recover billions of dollars in health care costs associated with treating smoking-related illnesses. The tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (MSA), which was entered into by 52 states and territories, resolved these lawsuits and banned tobacco advertising targeting youth, specifically limiting sponsorship of auto racing events.⁴

We are not alone in making this request: recently, over 160 public health entities called on Formula 1 to make these changes.⁵ Research shows that tobacco advertising influences youth to start using tobacco products.⁶ A 2022 study found that tobacco marketing exposure is associated with youth nicotine pouch use, and the influence of exposure to one tobacco product can influence the subsequent use of other tobacco products.⁷ That study also found that youth oral nicotine pouch use is increasing while the rate of use of other types of tobacco are on the decline.⁸ Just as marketing boosts youth use, data clearly shows that bans on tobacco advertising *significantly* reduces the risk of smoking initiation.⁹

In 2025, Formula 1 had a banner year in terms of youth viewership, with “record-breaking attendance [and] unprecedented digital engagement.”¹⁰ Viewership by children aged 12-17 increased 49% over 2021.¹¹ Likewise, Formula 1 is enjoying a massive social media boom across all the major platforms with 107.6 million followers.¹² Formula 1 reported that “16-24-year-old females [are] the fastest-growing age sector.”¹³

⁴ Four states—Florida, Minnesota, Mississippi, and Texas—are not signatories to the MSA. These states have their own individual tobacco settlements, which occurred prior to the MSA.

⁵ *An Open Letter to Formula 1 from Over 160 Organizations in the U.S. and Worldwide: End All Tobacco Company Sponsorships* (Mar. 4, 2026), https://assets.tobaccofreekids.org/content/press_office/2026/2026_03_04_Letter-to-Formula-1_End-tobacco-sponsorships.pdf.

⁶ Ctrs. for Disease Control & Prevention, *Tobacco Industry Marketing*, https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/tobacco_industry/marketing/ (last visited Apr. 16, 2026).

⁷ Saber Feizy et al., *Tobacco Marketing Exposure and Lifetime and Current Nicotine Pouch Use Among US Youth*, 2022, 197 *Prev. Med.* 108322 (2025).

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Saad C. et al., *Effectiveness of Tobacco Advertising, Promotion and Sponsorship Bans on Smoking Prevalence, Initiation and Cessation: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis*, *Tobacco Control* (Jan. 13, 2025).

¹⁰ *Records, Growth and Unforgettable Moments – The 2025 Formula 1 Season So Far*, Formula 1 (Aug. 28, 2025), <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/records-growth-and-unforgettable-moments-the-2025-formula-1-season-so-far.lusXKBpUsYIndrYz22GQTq>.

¹¹ Andy Hall, *Formula 1 Season Smashes U.S. Television Viewership Records*, ESPN Press Room U.S. (Nov. 22, 2022), <https://espnpressroom.com/us/press-releases/2022/11/formula-1-season-smashes-u-s-television-viewership-records/>.

¹² *Formula 1 2025 Season – A Half Year Review*, Formula 1 (Aug. 28, 2025), <https://corp.formula1.com/formula-1-2025-season-a-half-year-review/>.

¹³ Phillip Horton, *F1 Study Reveals Half of Sport’s Fans in U.S. Are New to Formula 1 Since 2020*, *Autoweek* (Dec. 13, 2024), <https://www.autoweek.com/racing/formula-1/a63185311/fl-fan-study-reveals-fans-new-formula-1-since-2020/>.

Formula 1 has promoted youth-focused cross-sponsorships. Formula 1's popularity with youth has been driven through its streaming partnership with Netflix's *Drive to Survive*¹⁴ series and the docuseries *F1: The Academy*,¹⁵ which highlights the F1 ACADEMY, an all-female junior category of racing with drivers as young as 16 years old.¹⁶ In fact, the F1 ACADEMY partnered with Hello Kitty for the 2025 Las Vegas Grand Prix to present the Hello Kitty Grandstands, along with exclusive F1 ACADEMY x Hello Kitty merchandise.¹⁷ Formula 1 also has joined with Disney,¹⁸ Lego,¹⁹ and Mattel to sell race-themed toys.²⁰ Lego and Mattel Hot Wheels each offer miniature race cars featuring sponsors' ads. But, perhaps aware of the danger to children and an interest in protecting their own youth-focused brands, Lego and Mattel conspicuously leave off Velo nicotine pouch insignias from their toy McLaren. In fact, a life-size fully drivable Lego McLaren car created for the 2025 Miami Grand Prix Drivers' Parade was free of any Velo advertisements.²¹

As Attorneys General, we take seriously our responsibility to protect American families, who have been free of most tobacco advertising for decades, thanks in large part to the MSA and television broadcast laws restricting cigarette advertising. We therefore urge FIA and Formula 1 to do their part to safeguard youth by terminating all current tobacco and nicotine product sponsorships immediately and expanding existing policies prohibiting cigarette sponsorships to include sponsorship by newer tobacco products, such as nicotine pouches. Formula 1 fans, especially the youngest viewers, deserve to enjoy race day without being targeted by the tobacco industry.

Sincerely,



Anne E. Lopez
Hawaii Attorney General



Charity Clark
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¹⁴ How "Drive to Survive" Has Changed F1 Fandom and Racing Culture, Formula 1, <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/how-drive-to-survive-has-changed-fl-fandom-and-racing-culture.2slawNwTgDiKRGGe9TZ3N9> (last visited Mar. 23, 2026).

¹⁵ *F1: The Academy*, F1 ACADEMY, <https://www.f1academy.com/About/2nHOFAd54n6cNEPGhm4QG5/f1-the-academy> (last visited Mar. 23, 2026).

¹⁶ *F1 Academy Rules and Regulations*, F1 ACADEMY, <https://www.f1academy.com/About/5tFG4jMNRPG2LzxYgk5mxU/rules-and-regulations> (last visited Mar. 23, 2026).

¹⁷ Formula 1 Las Vegas Grand Prix, *F1 Academy Races Towards Milestone Finale Under Las Vegas Lights with Hello Kitty* (Sept. 2025), <https://www.f1lasvegasp.com/2025/09/f1-academy-races-towards-milestone-finale-under-las-vegas-lights-with-hello-kitty/>.

¹⁸ *Formula 1 and Disney Launching Mickey & Friends Collaboration in 2026*, Formula 1 (May 20, 2025), <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/formula-1-and-disney-launching-mickey-and-friends-collaboration-in-2026.1GZ8gwZn7VLXWgxouTRzbG>.

¹⁹ *The LEGO Group and Formula 1*®, LEGO, <https://www.lego.com/en-us/categories/fl> (last visited Mar. 20, 2026).

²⁰ *Hot Wheels Expands Formula 1® Collection to Include Scuderia Ferrari HP and Aston Martin Aramco Formula One™ Team*, Formula 1 (Oct. 24, 2025), <https://corp.formula1.com/hot-wheels-expands-formula-1-collection-to-include-scuderia-ferrari-hp-and-aston-martin-aramco-formula-one-team/>.

²¹ *Formula One World Championship Limited, Driveable LEGO big builds welcomed to Miami drivers' parade*, Formula 1 (May 4, 2025), <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/driveable-lego-big-builds-welcomed-to-miami-drivers-parade.nVkstNITKT6LNY5pnT4IU> (last visited Mar. 23, 2026).

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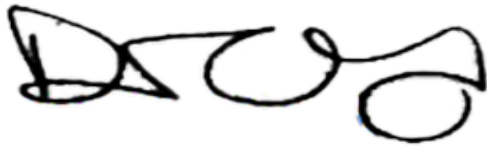
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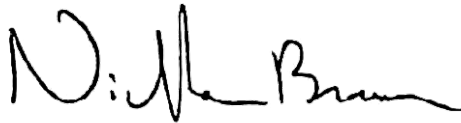
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Appendix

The following images are demonstrative of nicotine pouch advertising in Formula 1 racing.



Image 1. Velo branding on the 2023 McLaren MCL60.

See McLaren Racing, *Your Guide to the Las Vegas Grand Prix – Presented by OKX*, McLaren (Nov. 14, 2023), <https://www.mclaren.com/racing/formula-1/2023/las-vegas-grand-prix/guide-to-las-vegas/>.



Image 2. Velo branding on the 2025 McLaren MCL39.
See McLaren Racing, *Meet the MCL39*, McLaren (Feb. 18, 2025),
<https://www.mclaren.com/racing/formula-1/2025/mcl39-launch/>.

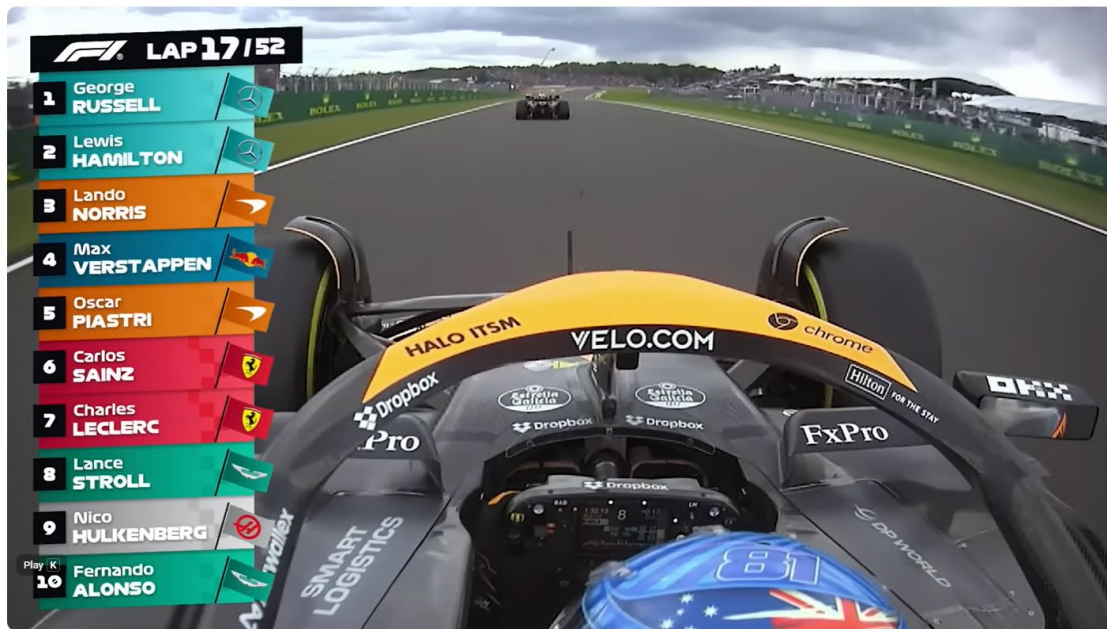


Image 3. Velo branding from F1 driver's view during 2024 British Grand Prix F1 Kids broadcast.
See FORMULA 1, *The 2024 British Grand Prix But Make It F1 Kids*, YouTube (July 12, 2024),
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CoHquh_GEO.

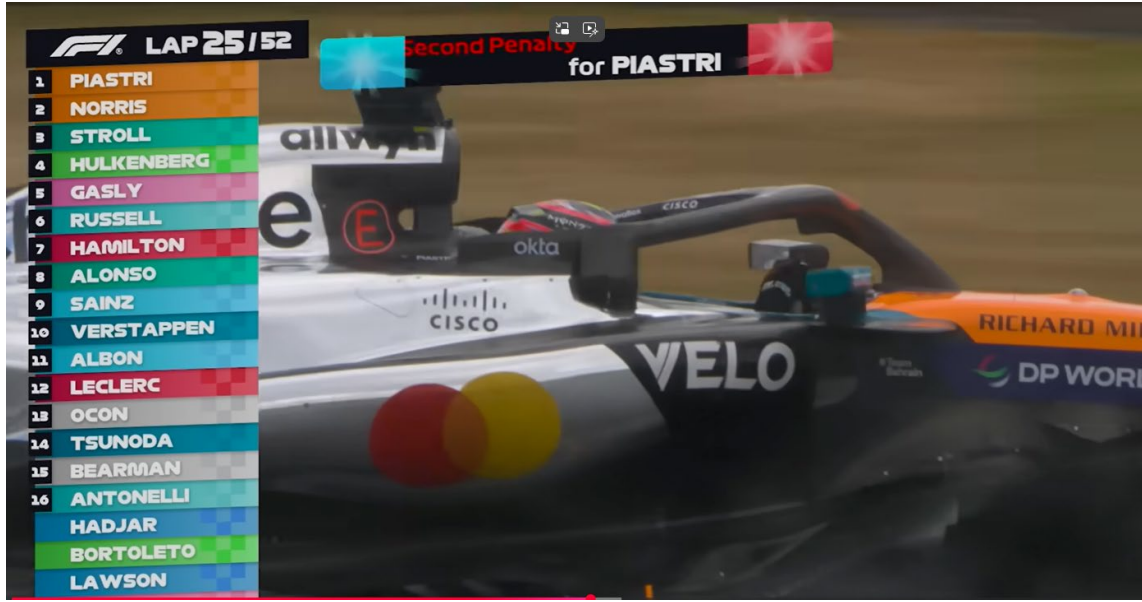


Image 4. Velo branding during 2025 British Grand Prix F1 Kids broadcast.
 See FORMULA 1, *The 2025 British Grand Prix But Make It F1 Kids*, YouTube (July 11, 2025),
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54MT0HhQsPI>.



Image 5. Zyn branding on Ferrari livery at 2025 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.
 See Scuderia Ferrari HP, *Scuderia Ferrari HP Extends Its Partnership With Philip Morris International*, Ferrari (Dec. 3, 2025), <https://www.ferrari.com/en-EN/formula1/articles/scuderia-ferrari-hp-philip-morris>.



Image 6. Zyn branding on 2026 Ferrari's SF-26.
See Scuderia Ferrari HP, *SF-26*, Ferrari, <https://www.ferrari.com/en-EN/formula1/sf-26> (last visited Mar. 23, 2026).