



June 27, 2012

United States House of Representatives  
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

As leading organizations dedicated to reducing the lethal toll of tobacco, we are writing to reiterate our strong support for Food and Drug Administration (FDA) oversight of tobacco products. We are pleased that the appropriations bill for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies reported by the Appropriations Committee did not weaken or limit FDA's authority over tobacco products. However, our organizations remain deeply concerned that amendments to reduce funding for or weaken implementation of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act (Tobacco Control Act) may be offered when the House takes up the appropriations bill.

We are particularly concerned that there may be an attempt to exclude many types of cigars from oversight by the FDA. While the health risks of cigar smoking are not the same as cigarette smoking, the U.S. Surgeon General and the National Cancer Institute have determined that cigar smoking causes cancer of the oral cavity, larynx, esophagus and lung, as well as chronic pulmonary disease (COPD) and heart disease. No product with such health risks should be exempt from oversight by FDA. Maintaining FDA's current authority

will ensure that oversight of all cigars is determined by a science-based process focused on protecting the public health.

While our organizations would oppose exempting any tobacco product from FDA's authority, we believe an amendment based on or similar to H.R. 1639 could apply to a broad array of cigars, including some of the cheap, flavored cigarillos and blunts that are popular with youth and often sold in convenience stores. In addition, manufacturers of cigars that do not meet the amendment's definition would have a strong incentive to modify their products to become exempt from FDA's oversight, such as by changing how much they weigh or what they are wrapped in. For additional information about why cigars should not be exempted from FDA authority, please go to <http://tfk.org/pressoffice/2012/cigars/hr1639.pdf>.

We are also concerned that there may be an attempt to reduce the resources FDA has to regulate tobacco products, all of which are user fees funded by the tobacco industry. Last year, during consideration of the FY 2012 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies appropriations bill, the House rejected an attempt to reduce funding for the FDA's Center for Tobacco Products. We urge you to oppose any similar effort this year.

After more than a decade of careful and thorough consideration, in 2009 Congress approved the Tobacco Control Act with strong, bipartisan support to protect America's children and the nation's health by putting in place common sense standards to regulate the tobacco industry. The law will help reduce the devastating health and economic toll of tobacco use on the nation. This lifesaving law should not be weakened.

The Tobacco Control Act was carefully crafted to protect the health of both current tobacco users and those who do not currently use tobacco products, especially children. Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, killing more than 400,000 Americans and costing the nation \$96 billion in health care expenses each year. The Tobacco Control Act provided the FDA with the tools necessary to regulate tobacco products using an independent science-based process. We urge you to oppose any attempt to impede in any way the FDA's ability to protect public health. To do otherwise would serve the interests of the tobacco industry to the detriment of the health of the nation.

Sincerely,

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American Heart Association  
American Lung Association  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Nurse Practitioners  
American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and  
Neck Surgery  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association for Cancer Research  
American Association for Respiratory Care  
American College of Cardiology  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American Dental Association  
American Dental Hygienists' Association  
American Medical Association

American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society of Clinical Oncology  
American Thoracic Society  
Association of Black Cardiologists  
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials  
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America  
National Association of City and County Health  
Officials  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Partnership for Prevention  
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and  
Interventions  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons  
United Methodist Church - General Board of  
Church and Society