



May 19, 2009

The Honorable Anthony Weiner
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Weiner:

We strongly support the Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act (H.R. 1676) that will soon be voted on by the full House. The PACT Act will help to prevent and reduce smoking and other tobacco use by preventing the illegal sale of tax-evading, low-priced cigarettes and smokeless tobacco over the Internet. The legislation will also make sure that Internet and other mail-order sellers do not sell to kids. Indeed, the PACT Act offers Congress a unique opportunity to fight crime, protect federal and state tax revenues, and promote public health, all at the same time.

Because of the nature of the Internet – and the ease with which illegal operators can close down existing websites and reappear with new ones – stopping illegal Internet tobacco product sales is extremely difficult. But the PACT Act will put new barriers in the way of illegal Internet sellers, and it will give federal and state enforcement officials the additional tools they need to get the job done.

The PACT Act will significantly impede illegal Internet sellers' ability to stay in business and it will make it far more difficult for criminal organizations to use the Internet as a distribution network for counterfeit cigarettes and other illicit tobacco products. The legislation also includes effective provisions to block other forms of contraband tobacco product trafficking. At the same time, the PACT Act has been carefully crafted to minimize any burdens or inconvenience for legally operating businesses.

As you know, we have had some concerns over the consumer testing amendment that was added into the bill at the Committee markup, and we greatly appreciate the efforts you and your staff have made to try to structure that amendment so it will not weaken the legislation. We look forward to continuing to work with you and with Senator Kohl in the Senate to ensure that provision will work effectively as intended without reducing the bill's ability to block illegal Internet sales of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco.

We commend you and your staff for your tireless efforts to get this important legislation passed into law, and we are pleased that the PACT Act will soon be considered by the full House. The bill has enjoyed strong, bipartisan support in the past, and we hope that will translate into a strong, final version being passed into law this year.

Sincerely,

Daniel E. Smith
President
American Cancer Society Cancer
Action Network

Charles D. Connor
President and Chief Executive Officer
American Lung Association

Nancy Brown
Chief Executive Officer
American Heart Association

Matthew L. Myers
President
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids