



Open Letter to America's Retailers, Especially Those with Pharmacies

From Leading Public Health and Medical Organizations

February 26, 2014

As organizations committed to ending the tobacco epidemic in the United States, we applaud the bold decision by CVS Caremark to eliminate the sale of cigarettes and other tobacco products in all its stores. We urge other retailers, especially those with pharmacies, to move quickly to end tobacco sales in their stores. CVS Caremark is absolutely right: The sale of tobacco products – the number one cause of preventable death and disease – is fundamentally inconsistent with a commitment to improving health.

As we observe the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the landmark 1964 U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health, the science on tobacco is unequivocal and inescapable. Tobacco products are uniquely lethal and addictive. They rob us of 480,000 American lives each year, sicken millions more and cost the nation at least \$289 billion annually in healthcare expenses and other economic losses.

The latest Surgeon General's report also underscored that tobacco use is a pediatric epidemic – 90 percent of adult smokers start by age 18 or earlier, and 5.6 million children alive today will die prematurely of smoking-caused disease unless all segments of our society join together to take strong action.

No corporation truly devoted to saving lives – like the nation's pharmacies are – can continue to simultaneously reap billions in profits from products that kill nearly half of the people who use them. Neither can any corporation committed to the well-being of our nation's children.

CVS Caremark's decision was met with cheers from their customers and the public at large because it is simply the right thing to do. We urge other retailers, especially those with pharmacies, to put our nation's children and health before tobacco profits and move quickly to end tobacco sales. Such action would reduce the availability and marketing of tobacco products, accelerate progress in reducing tobacco use and ultimately help end the tobacco epidemic for good.

Respectfully,

American Association for Respiratory Care  
American Association for Cancer Research  
American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American College of Cardiology  
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American Lung Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society of Clinical Oncology  
American Thoracic Society  
Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights  
Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
Cancer Prevention and Treatment Fund  
CASA Columbia  
Legacy  
LIVESTRONG  
Lung Cancer Alliance  
National Consumers League  
National Association of City and County Health Officials  
National Latino Alliance for Health Equity  
National Physicians Alliance  
North American Quitline Consortium  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Partnership for Prevention  
Smoking Cessation Leadership Center  
Trust for American's Health