



April 20, 2009

Dear Senator:

On April 2nd, by an overwhelming, bipartisan vote of 298-112, the House of Representatives passed the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act (HR 1256), legislation that would grant the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the authority to regulate the manufacture and marketing of tobacco products. We urge the Senate to take action on this legislation as soon as possible.

Tobacco-caused diseases remain the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S., killing more than 400,000 Americans each year and costing our health care system an estimated \$96 billion annually. More than 1,000 kids become regular, daily smokers each day – and one-third of them will ultimately die from their addiction. Amazingly, tobacco products are virtually unregulated by the federal government. Tobacco products are exempt from basic health regulations that apply to other consumer products such as drugs, medical devices and foods. This special protection allows tobacco companies to market their deadly and addictive products to children, mislead consumers about the dangers of their products, and continue to manipulate ingredients in order to make them more addictive and attractive to children.

There are more than 1000 organizations that support this legislation including the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, along with public health, medical and faith groups and their allies at the national, state and local levels (the full list of supporting organizations can be seen at: <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/fda/organizations.pdf>).

Both the President’s Cancer Panel and the Institute of Medicine support Congress giving the FDA the authority to regulate the manufacture and marketing of tobacco products. In its groundbreaking 2007 report, *Ending the Tobacco Epidemic: A Blueprint for the Nation*, the Institute of Medicine argued, “...product regulation by the FDA will advance tobacco control efforts in the United States and around the world. The proposed tobacco control legislation embodies the principles that should govern the regulation of tobacco products in the coming years.”

It is time for the United States Senate to stand with the next generation of young Americans and help them avoid a deadly, life-long addiction to tobacco. We urge the Senate to act now.

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