



November 26, 2013

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As Presidents and CEOs of leading organizations devoted to improving our nation's health, we urge you to seize upon the upcoming 50th Anniversary of the first Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health, through your personal involvement and other actions, to highlight how far we have come as a nation and what more must be done to reach the ultimate goal of eliminating the death and disease caused by tobacco use.

The Surgeon General's report of January 11, 1964, forever changed Americans' understanding of the deadly consequences of smoking, and was a historic turning point in the nation's fight against tobacco use and its devastating consequences. On the 50th Anniversary, it is time for the United States to commit to ending the tobacco epidemic once and for all.

Since 1964, we have made enormous progress. But the battle is far from over, and tobacco use remains the number one cause of preventable death in the United States. Smoking kills 443,000 Americans each year, sickens millions more and costs the nation nearly \$200 billion annually in health care expenditures and lost productivity. About 44 million adults and 3.6 million kids still smoke in the U.S. It is shocking and unacceptable that, 50 years after the first Surgeon General's report, tobacco still addicts so many children, kills so many Americans, devastates so many families and places such a huge burden on our nation's health care system.

We applaud you and your Administration for making the fight against tobacco a priority and taking truly unprecedented action to accelerate progress. You have signed into law landmark measures that provide critical new tools for protecting Americans from the dangers of tobacco, including the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, the Affordable Care Act, the Prevent All Cigarette Trafficking Act, and the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act, which included an increase in the federal tobacco tax. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has launched a highly successful national media campaign to reduce tobacco use.

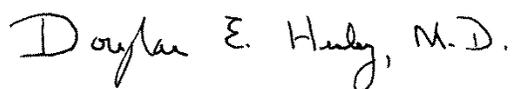
The 50th anniversary of the first Surgeon General's report presents the ideal occasion for you to highlight these accomplishments and the historic opportunities they present to dramatically reduce smoking, protect children from tobacco addiction, save millions of lives and save billions of dollars in tobacco-related health care costs. With your leadership and bold action at all levels of government to address the tobacco epidemic, we can reduce smoking rates to less than 10 percent within 10 years and ultimately eliminate the death and disease caused by tobacco.

The following federal actions are particularly critical to achieving these goals:

- Implementation of the robust media campaigns planned by the CDC and the FDA to prevent kids from smoking and encourage smokers to quit.
- Full and effective implementation of the FDA's authority under the Tobacco Control Act to regulate the manufacturing, marketing and sale of tobacco products, including the development of a product standard to reduce the harm caused by tobacco products.
- An unprecedented research initiative that would allow us to catch up on the tobacco industry's 50-year head start that has allowed them to manipulate their products to make them more addictive and attractive to children. The knowledge we gain from this research will support effective action to reduce the terrible toll of tobacco on our nation's health.
- A significant increase in the federal tobacco tax, as you proposed earlier this year.
- Rigorous enforcement of the Affordable Care Act's requirement that health plans provide coverage for recommended smoking cessation treatments.

Our organizations will be focusing national attention on this anniversary and a national campaign will be launched to end the tobacco epidemic. We call on you to lead this campaign, through your personal involvement in the anniversary commemorations and through specific federal actions that can help achieve our shared vision of a country where every child grows up tobacco-free and this preventable epidemic becomes a distant memory.

Respectfully,



Douglas E. Henley, MD
Executive Vice President
American Academy of Family Physicians



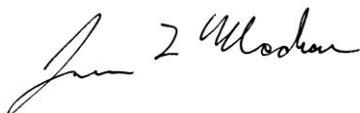
Thomas K. McInerney, MD, FAAP
President
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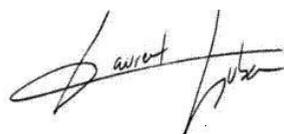
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