

## Faith United Against Tobacco



February 26, 2007

Dear Senator/Representative:

We are writing to you as leaders of Faith United Against Tobacco, a faith coalition comprised of clergy and lay members throughout the country, to strongly urge you to support S. 625 and H.R. 1108, the Kennedy-Cornyn and Waxman-Davis bills that would authorize the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to regulate tobacco. We in the faith community believe that our nation's leaders, and particularly our Members of Congress, have a moral obligation to do all they can to protect Americans, particularly children, from tobacco addiction and disease, and we are united on this issue.

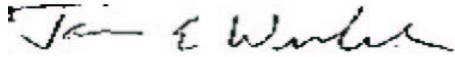
Granting FDA authority to regulate tobacco products would prevent tobacco companies from adding even more deadly and addictive ingredients, prohibit candy-flavored cigarettes, prevent tobacco sales to underage children and limit advertising and promotion of tobacco products that lure children into a deadly habit. We find it incredible that the FDA can ensure the safety of everyday items like macaroni and cheese, but has no authority over tobacco, a product that kills over 400,000 Americans every year. No one wants too much government regulation, but FDA authority to regulate tobacco products will simply treat tobacco manufacturers like the manufacturers of other products – it will level the playing field and assure the protection of consumers and our children.

Over the last few years, Faith United Against Tobacco has been working with the public health community to draw attention to the need for FDA oversight of tobacco products. We have spoken out on this issue because we have spent too much time burying mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers who die because they became addicted to tobacco products when they were young. We know that the tobacco companies continue to spend billions of dollars marketing their deadly products to children and far too many high school students smoke.

Moreover, the evidence about tobacco industry's misdeeds and the harm caused by this unregulated product keeps mounting. On August 17, 2006, federal Judge Gladys Kessler found the major tobacco companies to be racketeers who have lied – and continue to lie – to the American people about the health risks of their products and their marketing to children. Then, on the heels of this court decision, a report by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health found that tobacco companies have secretly and significantly increased the levels of nicotine in cigarette smoke between 1998 and 2004.

Now that strong, effective FDA legislation, S 625 and H.R.1108, has been reintroduced, we ask that you cosponsor it and work for its speedy enactment into law during the first session of the new Congress. It is time to protect our children and families.

If you have any questions or would like to reply to this request, please contact Vinny DeMarco, 410-235-9000, Coordinator for Faith United Against Tobacco.



James Winkler, General Secretary  
General Board of Church and Society  
United Methodist Church



Bishop Henry Williamson  
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church



Dr. DeWitt Williams, Director, Health Ministries, North American Division,  
Seventh-day Adventists



Rita K. Wert, President  
National Woman's Christian Temperance Union



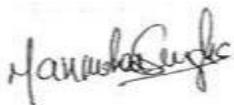
Julie Taylor, Executive Secretary for Children, Youth and Family Advocacy  
Women's Division, GBGM  
United Methodist Church



Dr. Sayyid M. Syeed, National Director  
Islamic Society of North America



Reverend William G. Sinkford, President,  
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations



Manmohan Singh, General Secretary  
World Sikh Council - America Region



Rabbi David Saperstein, Director and Counsel  
Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism



Dr. Tyrone S. Pitts, General Secretary  
Progressive National Baptist Convention



Reverend Deborah L. Patterson, Executive Director  
International Parish Nurse Resource Center



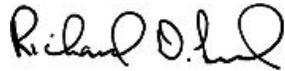
Dr. Walter I. Parrish, II, Executive Minister  
American Baptist Churches of the South



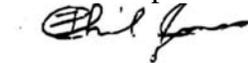
Rev. Dr. A Roy Medley, General Secretary  
American Baptist Churches USA



Peggy Matteson, President  
Health Ministries Association



Dr. Richard D. Land, President, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission  
Southern Baptist Convention



Phil Jones, Director  
Brethren Witness/Washington Office



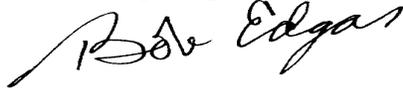
Rev. Elenora Giddings Ivory, Director, Washington Office  
Presbyterian Church (USA)



Andrew Genszler, Director for Domestic Policy  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Matthew Ellis, Executive Director  
National Episcopal Health Ministries



Reverend Bob Edgar, General Secretary  
National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA



Reverend Ruben Cruz, Church Finance Council  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)



Reverend Michael H. Crosby, OFM Cap., Coordinator Tobacco Program  
Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility



Patricia G. Burkhardt, Legislative Officer  
Church Women United



Barbara Baylor, M.P.H., Minister for Health and Wellness  
United Church of Christ



Rev. David Adams, General Secretary  
General Commission on United Methodist Men