

June 12, 1991

The Honorable
Paul Simon
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Simon:

When The Tobacco Institute launched an initiative last December to discourage young people from smoking, you were kind enough to send us a brief note applauding our efforts. To bring you up to date, I would like to share with you some of the results we have achieved since we announced the program six months ago.

You might be interested to know that almost 6,000 "Tobacco: Helping Youth Say No" booklets have been distributed in the State of Illinois, to the people who have requested it, including parents, school counselors, and civic and youth group leaders. For example, the Havlicik Elementary School in Berwyn, Illinois sent the booklet to all the parents of their students. The South Macoupin County Head Start program sent the booklet home with each of the children in their program. The Wadsworth School in Chicago gave a copy of the booklet to all the parents of the children who attend the school. And Douglas Wahl, a church youth group leader in Crystal Lake, Illinois, wrote after receiving copies of the booklet and said, "I was very impressed with the content of the guide. The material is both interesting and informative. I am sure that it will provide an exciting group discussion."

Our retail program, "It's the Law," which provides -- free of charge -- decals, buttons and educational materials to help store owners, employees and customers comply with state laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to those who are underage, has over 100 cosponsoring organizations, including the Illinois Association of Tobacco & Candy Distributors and the Illinois Retail Merchants Association. Many Illinois stores, including American Drug Stores, Aterco, Baxters Amoco Food Shop, Bell Fuels Inc., CFM Franchising Co., Clark Oil and Refining Corp., Convenient Food Mart, Country Food & Liquor, Country Market, Eagle Foods, Food Bonanza, Huffmans, Dan's Mobil, REO, Sterks Super Foods, Wetterau Foods and the 4-0-II Quick Shop have agreed to participate in the program. Over 5,500 program kits have been sent to date to stores in the state of Illinois. We are also distributing our "It's the Law" materials at state trade shows scheduled this year in Marion, Peoria and Rock Island. In addition, we distributed materials at the Food Marketing Institute's annual trade show in Chicago.

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With support from federal and state officials like yourself, we want to curb young people's access to cigarettes. To that end, we are supporting state legislation to establish 18 as the minimum age to purchase cigarettes in states having no age law, or one lower than 18. Since we launched the program in December, the State of Wyoming has enacted a law establishing 18 as the minimum age for the purchase of tobacco products, and the State of Vermont, Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia have raised to 18 the minimum age for the purchase of tobacco products. And the industry continues to support such provisions in Delaware, Georgia, Missouri, Montana and New Mexico, where legislation has been introduced.

In addition, we are supporting state legislation requiring supervision of vending machines in Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Kansas, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Tennessee and Wisconsin.

The tobacco industry is committed to a long-term program to discourage young people from smoking. We believe the actions outlined above are appropriate and timely and that they go a long way toward achieving our shared goal of discouraging youth from smoking.

Sincerely,

Samuel D. Chilcote, Jr.

SDC/mlm

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