



July 1, 2016

**Re: 2016 Snuff Tobacco Money out of California Politics Campaign**

Dear Sir or Madam:

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network invites you to join our 2016 Snuff Tobacco Money out of California Politics campaign. When we debuted this campaign two years ago, we asked every state officeholder and candidate for state office a very simple question: Will you help snuff tobacco money out of California politics by rejecting any campaign contribution from any tobacco company including, but not limited to Altria Client Services Inc. and its affiliates; Cigar Association of America; and RAI Services Company and its affiliates?

As we enter the third year of this campaign, we believe this issue has taken on a particular resonance with voters and the media. There are few industries active in California politics as reviled as the tobacco companies—and for good reason. Tobacco killed 100 million people in the last century and is on track to kill a billion people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century if current trends hold. We believe that accepting money from a tobacco company sends an implicit message that these powerful companies are legitimate, despite being convicted of racketeering in a federal court just a decade ago.

Each candidate who has qualified for the 2016 general election will get this letter soon. If you have accepted our challenge, we would like to thank you. We will continue to list you on our website as someone who has stood up to Big Tobacco by rejecting tobacco money so long as you are either running or occupying your current seat as an officeholder. If you are running for a different office (i.e., switching from Assembly to Senate), we ask you to renew your participation in this challenge.

If you are a new candidate or a current office holder who has not accepted our challenge to reject tobacco company campaign contributions, we encourage you to do so. You were sent an email with a unique link to a secure form to accept the challenge. If you did not receive the email, you can accept the challenge now. Simply [fill out the form](#) available on our website and return it to us via mail, email or fax. Only the online acceptance or returning the signed form via mail email or fax will be treated as “accepting” the pledge for purposes of this program. If you are a candidate or current office holder who has accepted tobacco money, we urge you to return the money. We will happily highlight your courageous decision on our website. If you are a candidate who has already returned a tobacco campaign contribution, we thank you.

**California Office**

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All responses to our challenge will be posted on our website at [www.notobaccomoney.org](http://www.notobaccomoney.org). If a candidate or office holder accepts a campaign contribution from a tobacco company, that is an obvious rejection of our campaign and they will be listed on our website as having done so. In order to be listed as someone who has [accepted our challenge](#) to forgo tobacco company donations, we must have a record that you have accepted our challenge. Any other means of communicating support for the challenge will not result in the candidate being listed as “accepting” the challenge on the website or other materials. We request that you respond before August 1.

In California alone, the tobacco companies have spent more than \$50 million over the last five years on lobbying and campaign contributions to block any policy that would reduce tobacco use. Their business model is simple. The more people use tobacco products, the more money they make. Spending money to influence elections and legislation serves only one purpose—to prevent any policies from passing that will result in fewer people smoking. They don’t care who dies from using their products, so long as they keep smoking. The tobacco industry spends nearly \$600 million on marketing every year to addict new customers—primarily children—and then spend tens of millions of dollars every year to make sure no policies can pass that would reduce the number of smokers in our state.

It is estimated that 40,000 Californians will die from smoking every year. There are 441,000 children who are alive now that will die prematurely due to smoking-related disease. It is the single largest preventable cause of death. Smoking kills more people than alcohol, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs, murders and suicides combined. The annual health care costs in California directly caused by smoking are \$13.29 billion. Medi-Cal covers \$3.5 billion of those costs each year. The tax burden from smoking-caused government expenditure is \$777 per household. Smoking-caused productivity loss in California costs an additional \$10.35 billion a year.

Just as the tobacco companies spend money to addict children and adults to their products, so too, do they try to addict elected officials to tobacco money. You have the opportunity to help end this vicious cycle

We issue you this challenge: Will you reject the deception, pain and suffering that fund campaign contributions from tobacco companies and will you stand with ACS CAN and help us “Snuff Tobacco Money out of California Politics?”

Sincerely,

Tim Gibbs  
Senior Director, Government Relations  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)

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