



April 3, 2018

Re: 2018 Snuff Tobacco Money out of California Politics Campaign

Dear Candidate:

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network invites you to join our 2018 Snuff Tobacco Money out of California Politics campaign. When we debuted this campaign four 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; NJOY; Juul Labs and RAI Services Company and its affiliates?

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 21st century if current trends hold. We believe that accepting money from a tobacco company sends a message that these powerful companies are legitimate, despite being convicted of racketeering in a federal court just over a decade ago.

Every candidate running for state office in 2018 will receive the same request to forgo tobacco industry contributions. All responses to our challenge will be posted on our website at 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 the signed acceptance form. Please return the accompanied form back to us via e-mail or fax. Only a signed form may be recognized as having 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.

If you have accepted our challenge while running for a different state or district office, we would like to thank you. However, candidates running for a new office must renew their acceptance of the challenge and fill out a new form. 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.

In California alone, the tobacco companies have spent nearly \$200 million the last decade and a half on lobbying and campaign contributions to block policies 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 policies from passing that will result in fewer people using tobacco products. 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 in California to addict new customers—primarily children—and then spends millions of dollars to make sure no policies can pass that would reduce the number of smokers in our state.

Paid for by Snuff Tobacco Money out of California Politics Campaign sponsored by American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Inc.

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This campaign to highlight the corrosive impact of the tobacco industry and their campaign contributions has been a success. After decades of virtual veto power in the legislature and at the ballot, the tobacco companies were resoundingly defeated in 2016. Voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 56 which is a \$2 tax on all tobacco products with funding going to healthcare and tobacco prevention programs. The legislature also passed an historic package of bills that reasserted California's leadership in tobacco control.

However, the job is not done. The tobacco companies are still spending unseemly amounts of money and even after their defeat in 2016, they have spent nearly \$4 million in the last year. They have been especially active at the local level opposing ordinances across California at the city and county level that would save lives. Their efforts prove there is much work still to do. 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)