



## *National Association of School Nurses*

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July 11, 2008

The Honorable  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear:

We are writing to you today to express our concern about the unacceptably high rate of students smoking cigarettes. As School Nurses, we do our best to help prevent pre-teen and teenage smoking through health education and other prevention techniques; however, these efforts are not enough.

Having the support of measures, such as H.R. 1108, the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, would greatly assist the prevention work of School Nurses, parents, teachers, and community coalitions who want to make a significant difference in smoking initiation among young people and a lasting improvement in the broader public health. The bill's conveyance of tobacco industry oversight to the U.S. Food & Drug Administration is what's needed to show our Nation's youth that the Federal Government is serious about limiting marketing and sales of tobacco products to children.

The tobacco industry has for too long unduly influenced young Americans to take up smoking, which often leads to a lifetime addiction and a host of related diseases. The incontrovertible data says it all – every day 4,000 people under the age of 18 try smoking for the first time; some 1,140 become daily cigarette smokers.<sup>1</sup> The battle to stave off youthful tobacco use has been waged on an uneven field, with a largely unbridled tobacco industry spending \$36 million per day on advertising alone.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, the National Association of School Nurses is joining the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids and the American Lung Association, as well as the American School Health Association, the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National School Boards Association in urging your support for legislative action that will ban all tobacco advertising within 1,000 feet of schools and playgrounds; and provide access to tobacco manufacturers' research, including information on the health effects of their products, nicotine and its addictiveness, and marketing to children.

It's time for Congress to take new definitive congressional actions affecting smoking and youth. Your support would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy L. Garcia RN".

Amy Garcia, RN, MSN  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> CDC Fact Sheet: Youth and Tobacco Use,  
[http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/Factsheets/youth\\_tobacco.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/Factsheets/youth_tobacco.htm)

<sup>2</sup> CDC Fact Sheet: Tobacco Industry Marketing,  
[http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/Factsheets/tobacco\\_industry.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/Factsheets/tobacco_industry.htm)