

April 24, 2013

Dear Representative,

We are writing on behalf of the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR), the world's largest and oldest organization dedicated to preventing and curing cancer, to respectfully request that you oppose H.R. 792, the "Traditional Cigar Manufacturing and Small Business Jobs Preservation Act of 2013," which would exempt many cigars from U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulation. There is a common misperception that cigars are not addictive, do not cause cancer, and are only used by adults, and therefore should not be regulated. However, decades of evidence clearly points to the contrary. Cigars, like cigarettes, are addictive and carcinogenic. Furthermore, youth consumption of cigars has skyrocketed over the past decade.

Research shows unequivocally that tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of cancer. Every year approximately 169,000 Americans die due to tobacco-induced cancers, and combining cancer deaths with those that tobacco causes due to strokes, heart attacks and pulmonary diseases raises the annual death toll to 443,000, which is over two times the death toll due to all accidents, murders and suicides combined. In addition, tobacco's impact is disproportionately felt by low income, less educated and underserved racial/ethnic minority populations.

In 2009, Congress recognized the enormous health and economic burden posed by tobacco use by passing the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act (FSPTCA) in a strongly bipartisan manner. While cigars were not immediately regulated, the FDA was given the authority by the FSPTCA to extend regulatory jurisdiction over cigars in addition to cigarettes. The FDA has signaled that it will exercise that authority in April of 2013.

It is entirely appropriate for FDA to regulate these addictive, cancer-causing products. Moreover, by extending its regulatory authority over cigars, FDA can help to reduce tobacco use by children. One of the goals of FSPTCA was to keep children from initiating smoking because approximately 90% of all adult long-term smokers began smoking before the age of 18. While the FSPTCA prevented tobacco companies from appealing to children by banning the addition of candy flavorings to cigarettes, cigars were not included in this ban, so adding flavorings such as grape, watermelon, strawberry, peach and chocolate to cigars is still used to attract children to tobacco. We hope that extending FDA's regulatory authority over cigars will result in a ban on candy flavoring in all cigars as well, but H.R. 792 would impede the FDA's ability to do so.

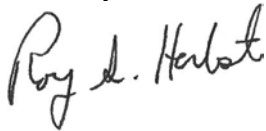
Lastly, the title of the bill implies that the intent of the legislation is to protect and promote economic activity and jobs, but it would also have the effect of promoting smoking, which imparts an enormous economic burden on our society. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has estimated that in 2004 smoking cost the U.S. economy \$193 billion in health costs, employee absenteeism and lost productivity. The cost to individual states can be found in the CDC document [here](#). From shorter lifespans to higher health insurance premiums, smoking depresses economic growth, and the provisions in this bill would contribute to the societal burden that tobacco already imposes.

Margaret Foti, Ph.D., M.D. (h.c.)
Chief Executive Officer

On behalf of the 34,000 members of the AACR who are dedicated to preventing and curing cancer, we hope you will join us in our fight against this disease by opposing H.R. 792. More information on the health dangers of cigars can be found at: <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet/Tobacco/cigars>.

If you have any questions about the AACR's position on tobacco or the regulation of cigars, please do not hesitate to contact Mary Lee Watts, at the AACR Office of Science Policy and Government Affairs. She can be reached at marylee.watts@aacr.org or 202-898-6499.

Sincerely,



Roy S. Herbst, M.D., Ph.D.
Chair, AACR Tobacco and Cancer Subcommittee



Margaret Foti, Ph.D., M.D. (h.c.)
Chief Executive Officer, AACR