



FEDERATION OF AMERICAN CONSUMERS AND TRAVELERS

- NEWS RELEASE -

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Tobacco Bill Passes in the Senate

EDWARDSVILLE, IL, June 12, 2009 -The Senate has passed legislation authorizing the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to regulate tobacco products.

Congress has noted that smoking remains “the No. 1 preventable cause of death in America,” as some “400,000 Americans a year” die of smoking-related diseases.

Among other things, the legislation:

- Creates a tobacco control center within the FDA, giving that agency the authority to regulate the content, marketing and sale of tobacco products to protect public health.
- Demands that tobacco companies to seek FDA approval for any new tobacco products, and allows the FDA to change tobacco product content.
- Bans the use of flavors, including candies and fruit flavors, in tobacco products.
- Requires direct, face-to-face transactions between retailer and consumer, and limits advertising that could attract young smokers.
- Strengthens warning labels.
- Establishes user fees on tobacco companies.

The 79-17 Senate vote sends the measure back to the House. House acceptance of the Senate bill would send it directly to the president, who is expected to sign.

Proponents of the legislation believe that it will ultimately help to save lives and reduce health care costs, and will save the young from being motivated by tobacco companies to start smoking.

Opponents fear that: (1) The FDA’s resources will be stretched thin, thereby weakening its oversight of the food and drug industries, and (2) The legislation further accelerates the 2009 trend of placing major segments of the U.S. economy (along with the banking, housing, credit card and automobile industries) under severely heightened federal control and/or ownership, and (3) The new “user fees” will be passed along to the consumer, in essence creating yet another “hidden tax.”

This news release is issued as a service of the Federation of American Consumers and Travelers (FACT). FACT was formed under the not-for-profit corporation laws of the District of Columbia in 1984, and currently serves more than 1 million consumers nationwide. Additional information on FACT may be found in the *Encyclopedia of Associations*, and by visiting the association's Web site (www.usafact.org). FACT does not express, or attempt to impose, any views -- either pro or con -- on the legislation mentioned in this release. Information is regularly disseminated by FACT without bias to help its members remain current on matters which might seriously impact their lives. In addition to publishing consumer-related reports, the association provides more than 30 benefits for its members, ranging from [medical insurance](#) and [dental discounts](#) to [prescription drug savings](#), [scholarships](#) and [consumer information](#). FACT’s administrative office is located at 318 Hillsboro Avenue, Edwardsville, IL 62025.

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