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- Phillip Morris reduced the price of smokeless Copenhagen and Skoal products in the first quarter of 2009 in an effort to boost sales
- NY State debates increasing tobacco licensing fees substantially
- St. Paul becomes first city in the U.S. to restrict the sale of faux tobacco products!

Please contact Betsy Brock with questions or comments:
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Maine Prohibits the Sale of Flavored Cigarettes and Cigars Starting July 1

On September 25, 2007 the state of Maine passed a law that bans the use of tobacco products on school grounds at any time (regardless of whether school is in session or not) and bans the sale of any flavored cigarettes or cigars. The provision which prohibits the use of tobacco on school grounds went into effect when the bill was passed back in 2007. The provision dealing with the sale of flavored cigars and cigarettes will take effect starting on July 1 of this year.

Maine Governor, John E. Baldacci, stated that he felt that both of these policy changes were important steps in the fight to prevent youth from tobacco exposure and tobacco use. Baldacci stated: "I was outraged to see the candy and fruit flavored tobacco products being sold. Tobacco companies focus on young people because they know that two-thirds of smokers start

by the age of 18. Not surprisingly, the tobacco companies are becoming more and more aggressive with their flavored tobacco products and other means to target youth."

Maine is the first state to ban the sale of flavored cigars and cigarettes. After July 1, retailers will have a six month "grace period" in which they can sell their remaining inventory of flavored cigars/ cigarettes. After this period, fines of up to \$1,000 for the first incident and \$5,000 for any additional incident may be imposed on retailers who do not comply.

While the law is a good start, there is room for improvement. For starters, the law does not ban the sale of flavored smokeless products. Additionally, products that were marketed before January 1, 1985 are exempt. The Attorney General of Maine is also given

the authority to exempt certain products if it is determined that the "...characterizing flavor and the associated packaging, promotion and brand style do not directly or indirectly target youth or encourage the initiation of smoking." Regardless of these issues, this law is a definite step in the right direction.



Sources: Associated Content:
http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/394015/maine_bans_flavored_cigarettes_and.html?cat=5 (5/22/09);
Tobacco Law Center:
www.tobaccolawcenter.org/documents/flavored-tobacco.pdf (5/22/2009)



RJ Reynolds Identifies Camel and Pall Mall as "Growth Brands"

RJ Reynolds (RJR) currently has 17 cigarette brands. Of these, RJR only considers two brands, Camel and Pall Mall, "growth brands." According to the company website: "RJR focuses its investment in Camel and Pall Mall to accelerate the brands' market-share growth and to drive the brands for long-term, accelerated growth and profit." While Camel ads are seen nearly everywhere, Pall Mall ads are a lot fewer and far between. However, RJR's identification of Pall Mall as a growth brand might indicate that more Pall Mall ads will begin appearing at point-of-sale, in magazines, and in mail-boxes.

RJR identifies Winston, Salem, Doral, Kool, Misty, and Capri as "support brands" meaning that the company "will put limited marketing support behind these brands and focus on balancing the brands' scale and long-term profit."

RJR classifies Lucky Strike, Monarch, Carlton, GPC, Tareyton, More, Now Eclipse, and Vantage as "non-support brands" meaning that the company will not provide marketing support for these brands. ♦

Source: RJR website:
<http://www.rjrt.com/company/brandsPortfolio.asp> (5/8/2009)



Ramsey Tobacco Coalition

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Collection of Promotional Items/ Products from Tobacco Companies Now Available!

Over the last couple of months, Ramsey Tobacco Coalition staff have been very busy archiving/ cataloging a large collection of promotional items from a variety of tobacco companies. These items have been gathered over years and years and are now being sorted and organized. So far, over 400 items have been cataloged. We have lots of vintage items (Camel clothing, Lucky Strike ads from the 1930s, a record of music from "Marlboro Country," etc.) as well as many "direct mail" advertising pieces that are more current. We also have a lot of tobacco products. If you would like to look at the archive or would like someone from the Ramsey Tobacco Coalition to come out to your organization for a "show and tell," feel free to contact Betsy Brock at bb@ansrmn.org or 651-646-3005.



Candidate Pledges: "No Thanks, Big Tobacco!"

Dave Pinto, candidate for Ramsey County Attorney, is first political candidate to sign a tobacco-free funding policy with the Ramsey Tobacco Coalition

During the 2005-2006 election cycle the tobacco industry donated \$1,895,584 to political candidates through various Political Action Committees (PACs) 1. Minnesotans should be proud that the vast majority of political leaders do not accept donations from the tobacco industry. The Ramsey Tobacco Coalition is asking political candidates to take a step further and sign a pledge promising that they will not accept any donations from the tobacco industry.

Dave Pinto, currently a domestic violence prosecutor in the Ramsey County Attorney's office, was the first candidate to adopt a Ramsey Tobacco Coalition tobacco-free funding pledge as part of his campaign. 'Smoking poses one of the most significant threats to our public health, and to the health of our young people in particular' stated Pinto. "As Ramsey County Attorney, I will represent the Ramsey County Department of Public Health, which is responsible for improving and protecting the health of Ramsey County citizens. As a husband and a father, I feel a

responsibility for setting a good example in my community and promoting healthy choices for my children. By refusing to accept tobacco money, my campaign seeks to encourage a healthy and safe environment for all while supporting public health in Ramsey County" stated Pinto. By signing a tobacco-free funding pledge, candidates for public office pledge to represent the public interest and public health and not the interest of the tobacco companies.

For more information on how your organization or candidate can adopt a tobacco-free funding policy contact Bernadette Chlebeck at 651-646-3005 or bc@ansrmn.org. ♦

Source:

1. <http://politicalwatchcentralcoast.org/tony-strickland/ts-campaign-finance/tobacco-contributions-buy>



Dave Pinto, candidate for Ramsey County Attorney, accepted an award for pledging not to take tobacco money at the Ramsey Tobacco Coalition meeting on May 20, 2009. Bernadette Chlebeck, Ramsey Tobacco Coalition staff, presented the award.