

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 2, 2012

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Ranking Member Cochran:

As the Committee begins deliberations on the FY 2013 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations legislation, we ask for your strong support for the Department of Health and Human Services' cross-agency activities to dramatically reduce tobacco use and its devastating toll on our nation's public health.

Tobacco use remains the greatest single threat to our nation's public health—causing 30 percent of all cancer deaths, 87 percent of all lung cancer deaths, and taking hundreds of thousands of lives each year. The recently released Surgeon General's report on tobacco found that tobacco use remains a "pediatric epidemic" that afflicts millions of children, immediately harming their health and putting them on a path to debilitating disease and premature death. A number of states have made great progress in reducing tobacco use but recently progress has stalled and we need a national commitment to address this epidemic.

Despite the difficult financial constraints your Committee will face this year, we urge you to make a strong investment in tobacco prevention and cessation. It is critical that tobacco prevention initiatives, such as the recently launched national media campaign to encourage smokers to quit and prevent children from starting to smoke, are adequately funded. As states have drastically cut tobacco prevention and cessation programs, it is also important that the federal government continue its modest grant program to states for tobacco prevention programs and state quitlines. These investments will save lives and save money by reducing the nearly \$100 billion in annual tobacco-related health care costs.

An increased commitment to tobacco-related research is also important now that the Food and Drug Administration has jurisdiction over most tobacco products. We must ensure that the federal government has the scientific evidence necessary to drive the development of effective policies and regulations necessary to reduce tobacco use.

Our nation has made great strides against the decades-long epidemic of tobacco-related addiction and disease, and our efforts must not waiver. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Richard Blumenthal".

Senator Richard Blumenthal

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Frank R. Lautenberg".

Senator Frank R. Lautenberg

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dick Durbin".

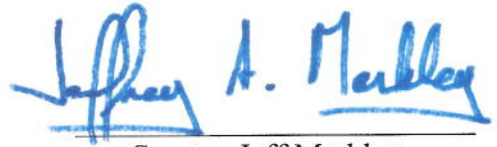
Senator Richard Durbin

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Bernard Sanders".

Senator Bernard Sanders

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ron Wyden".

Senator Ron Wyden

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jeff Merkley".

Senator Jeff Merkley