



CITIZENS' COMMISSION TO PROTECT THE TRUTH

FACT SHEET – CITIZENS' COMMISSION TO PROTECT THE TRUTH

Mission

The Citizens' Commission to Protect the Truth (www.protectthetruth.org) is working to prevent youth smoking by supporting the successful efforts of the American Legacy Foundation.

For the first time in the nation's history, past former U.S. Secretaries of Health, as well as all former U.S. Surgeons General and Directors of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Republican and Democrat from every Administration over the last forty years – have joined together to prevent youth from smoking – the only route to a smoke-free society.

About the Commission

The Citizens' Commission to Protect the Truth (the "Commission") was formed in early 2004 to promote public education to discourage smoking by children and teens, with a focus on continuing funding of the **truth**[®] campaign and discouraging and exposing marketing by tobacco companies that encourages smoking by children and teens. The Commission believes that it is of critical importance to fund the **truth**[®] campaign and that the tobacco industry should continue supporting it.

In particular, the Commission is working to end smoking by children and teens by urging the big tobacco companies — Philip Morris (Altria), Lorillard, RJ Reynolds, and Brown & Williamson – to continue providing financial support to the Public Education Fund under the Master Settlement Agreement. This fund provides the financial resources necessary for the American Legacy Foundation to wage counter-marketing campaigns like **truth**[®], credited by experts for its role in reducing the number of American teenagers who use tobacco. The last payments to the fund were made in 2003.

The American Legacy Foundation launched **truth**[®] in early 2000 and not long after, Monitoring the Future, one of the nation's most comprehensive substance abuse surveys, cited the **truth**[®] campaign in explaining the sharp decline in cigarette smoking among 8th, 10th, and 12th graders. From 2000 to 2002, cigarette smoking among middle and high school students declined 36 percent, with approximately 22 percent of the decline credited to **truth**[®].



Commission Charter

Whereas, smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States and kills more than 400,000 Americans every year – more deaths than from AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, murders, suicides, drugs fires, and war combined;

Whereas, 80 percent of adult smokers begin smoking at or before age 18;

Whereas, 95 percent of teens who smoke cigarettes start before age 16, the average age of initiation for teens who smoke cigarettes is 12 ¼;

Whereas, between one third and one half of youth who try a cigarette will become daily smokers; and each day, more than 2,000 children and teens become regular smokers – nearly 800,000 per year – and a third of them will eventually die from a tobacco-related disease;

Whereas, youth smoking prevention and public education efforts such as the American Legacy Foundation's truth[®] campaign are helping to produce dramatic declines in youth smoking rates, with the 2002 National Youth Tobacco Survey showing the following declines in smoking between 2000 and 2002 among students who had high exposure to the truth[®] campaign: a 29 percent decline among high school students and a 33 percent decline among middle school students; and

Whereas, the State signatories to the Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) signed in November 1998 by attorneys general in 46 states and five U.S. territories and the tobacco industry created the American Legacy Foundation because the States recognized that a comprehensive, coordinated program of public education and study was important to further the remedial goals of the MSA; and

Whereas, the State signatories to the MSA designated that a portion of the funds recovered from the tobacco industry be assigned to the American Legacy Foundation to support its programs, including the National Public Education Fund; and

Whereas, the American Legacy Foundation's truth[®] campaign is funded by these recovered state funds through annual payments by the tobacco industry in accordance with the MSA; and

Whereas, the obligation of the tobacco industry to make annual payments to support the Public Education Fund after March 31, 2003 (the 5 year anniversary of the MSA) is contingent on the MSA's original participating tobacco manufacturers – Philip Morris, Brown & Williamson, Lorillard, R.J. Reynolds – and the subsequent participating companies controlling 99.05% of the combined cigarette market share; and

Whereas, as of April 2003, the MSA's four original participating tobacco manufacturers and the subsequent participating companies will no longer meet the 99.05% threshold and are not expected to do so in the foreseeable future, and therefore will no longer be required by the MSA to continue making annual payments to support the Public Education Fund.

Therefore, we, the undersigned, call on these companies, which still control more than 90 percent of the combined cigarette market share, to honor their commitment to prevent youth smoking by continuing to make payments to support the Public Education Fund and ensuring the survival of proven and effective campaigns that decrease tobacco consumption among the nation's youth.



Commission Members

U.S. Secretaries of Health, Education and Welfare

- David Mathews, Ph.D., Ford Administration – 1975-1977
- Commission Chairman Joseph A. Califano, Jr., Carter Administration – 1977-1979

U.S. Secretaries of Health and Human Services

- Richard S. Schweiker, Reagan Administration, 1981-1983
- Margaret M. Heckler, Reagan Administration, 1983-1985
- Otis R. Bowen, M.D., Reagan Administration, 1985-1989
- Louis Sullivan, M.D., GHW Bush Administration, 1989-1993
- Donna E. Shalala, Ph.D., Clinton Administration, 1993-2001
- Tommy G. Thompson, GW Bush Administration, 2001-2005

Surgeons General

- Jesse Steinfeld, M.D., Nixon Administration, 1969-1973
- C. Everett Koop, M.D., Reagan Administration, 1982-1989
- Antonia C. Novello, M.D., M.P.H., DrPH, GHW Bush Administration, 1990-1993
- M. Joycelyn Elders, M.D., Clinton Administration, 1993-1994
- David Satcher, M.D., Clinton/GW Bush Administrations 1998-2002
- Richard H. Carmona, M.D., M.P.H., FACS, GW Bush Administration 2002-2006

Directors of the Center for Disease Control

- David J. Sencer, M.D., Johnson/Nixon/Ford Administrations 1966-1977
- William H. Foege, M.D., M.P.H., Carter/Reagan Administrations, 1977-1983
- James O. Mason, M.D., DrPH, Reagan Administration, 1983-1989

Directors of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- William L. Roper, M.D., M.P.H., GHW Bush Administration, 1990-1993
- David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D., Clinton Administration, 1993-1998
- Jeffrey P. Koplan, M.D., M.P.H., Clinton/GW Bush Administration, 1998-2002
- Julie Louise Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H., GW Bush Administration, 2002-2009

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Media Contact

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