

February 9, 2011

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We understand from an Associated Press report that you have been nicotine free for almost a year. Congratulations on your hard-fought success! Your example and perseverance means so much to millions of Americans struggling every day to break their addiction to cigarettes and other tobacco products. We believe your experience is an important narrative that can have a profound impact helping Americans make this important commitment to good health.

Although 70 percent of smokers say they want to quit and most try to quit each year, only a small percentage are successful. We urge you to share your success. Your experience in quitting smoking gives hope to millions who struggle with their addiction. Your example – that quitting, even in one of the world’s most stressful job, is possible with the right combination of therapy and family support – will encourage others to make the effort and realize the success.

Today, tobacco cessation leaders representing public health stakeholders from 14 states met in Washington, DC to share ideas and stories of their success in expanding the availability of tobacco cessation care to more Americans. They believe the enactment of the “Affordable Care Act” has done much to help remove obstacles to coverage and access that in the past limited the comprehensive, evidence-based cessation care that was available to you.

My colleagues join me in urging you to call upon the nation’s health plans, governors and all health professionals to make a personal and professional commitment to encourage tobacco cessation. There is no more cost effective prevention action the nation could take to help reduce the rising cost of health care.

Your voice on this issue carries special credibility and impact. In the coming months we urge you to take pride in your accomplishment and consider sharing your experience to help other smokers seek out the smoke-free pathway to a longer healthier life.

Sincerely yours,



Diane M. Canova
Vice President, Policy and Programs

Attachment: Endorsement from ActionToQuit Stakeholders

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Paula Van Heest
Grand Rapids, MI
ivanheest@tobacofreepartners.org

Jarvis Dawn
Norfolk, VA
jdawn@aptva.org

Pat. Bax
Niagara Falls, NY
buddler1025@roadrunner.com

Beverly Walmsmith
Des Moines, IA
beverly.walmsmith@gmail.com

Jane Deen
JDDeen@bellsouth.net
Atlanta, GA

Ann Wendland
Rochester, NY
awendland46@gmail.com

Allyson Paul
Lawrenceville, GA
msateya@yahoo.com

Amanda Fliger
Tallahassee, FL
amanda.fliger@gmail.com

Ed Miller
Hallowell ME
emiller@lungne.org

Brenda Olsen
brenda_olsen@comcast.net
Tallahassee, FL

Bob Doyle
Aurora, CO
BDoyle@CTEPA.org

Elaine McCool
909 Santa Barbara
East Grand Rapids MI 49506

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URBANDALE, IA
ft.burns@yahoo.com

Donna Warner
Belmont Massachusetts
Donna.warner@~~ms~~mscollaborative.org

Coolidge Spitzer, Ph.D.
Director of Health Promotion
Prevention and Community Health
School of Public Health and Health Services
The George Washington University
Washington, DC 20037