



Altria

Michael E. Szymanczyk
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

March 3, 2009

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Waxman:

On behalf of Altria Group, Inc. and its tobacco operating companies (including Philip Morris USA Inc., U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Company, and John Middleton Co.), I want to express our support for the *Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act*. Thank you for your leadership in this issue.

For more than eight years, Altria Group has supported tough but reasonable federal regulation of tobacco products by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). We have shown our support for previous versions of the *Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act* by visiting with Members of Congress to highlight its important benefits and by submitting testimony to Congress reaffirming our support for this legislation.

Altria Group and its tobacco operating companies believe that adult consumers should be the primary beneficiaries of a Federal regulatory framework: (1) under which all tobacco product manufacturers and importers doing business in the U.S. must operate at the same high standards; (2) for the pursuit of alternative tobacco products that are less harmful than conventional cigarettes; and (3) that should provide for transparent, accurate, and scientifically grounded communication about tobacco products to consumers. Such regulation can also benefit shareholders and other stakeholders.

From our perspective, the legislation introduced today is not perfect and, in fact, still contains provisions with which we do not agree. For example, we have repeatedly expressed First Amendment reservations about certain provisions, including those that could restrict a manufacturer's ability to truthfully communicate about tobacco products.

On balance, however, we believe the *Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act* provides an important step forward toward achieving the objective of providing tough but reasonable federal regulation of tobacco products. Accordingly, we encourage the Energy and Commerce Committee to report out this important legislation.

The bill introduced by you today reflects the result of difficult choices and compromises. We very much appreciate the work you and your staff have devoted to making the *Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act* a better piece of legislation and in listening to our views and concerns. Thank you again for the opportunity to express our support for the *Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Sproul". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "S" at the end.

cc: Members of Energy and Commerce Committee