

CAMPAIGN For TOBACCO-FREE Kids®

SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE LAWS REDUCE SMOKING AND THE CIGARETTE COMPANIES KNOW IT

For years, the cigarette companies have been adamantly opposing smoke-free work place laws by arguing that they reduce smokers' freedoms. But the companies' own internal documents, disclosed in the tobacco lawsuits, show that the cigarette companies actually oppose smoke-free laws because they raise awareness of the dangers of secondhand smoke and reduce smoking levels, thereby reducing the companies' sales and profits. While the cigarette companies argue that efforts to "accommodate" both smokers and non-smokers are preferable to smoke free laws, they are really just trying to protect their bottom line, no matter what harm that causes to the health of both smokers and non-smokers alike.

In The Industry's Own Words

- Philip Morris's own research shows that prohibiting smoking in the work place not only reduces consumption but also increases quit rates. A 1992 memo summarizing these findings states: "Total prohibition of smoking in the workplace strongly affect industry volume. Smokers facing these restrictions consume 11%-15% less than average and quit at a rate that is 84% higher than average."¹ The memo goes on to state that, "If smoking were banned in all workplaces, the industry's average consumption would decline 8.75-10.1% from 1991 levels and the quitting rate would increase 74% (e.g., from 2.5% to 4.4%)."²
- Another 1992 Philip Morris memo discusses the impact of workplace bans, "I have attached a copy of the 'workplace restrictions' memo that was issued prior to the one that we discussed. Here, we determined that total workplace bans are significantly more detrimental to the industry than moderate workplace restrictions. Any policy that seeks accommodation is, therefore, eminently correct."³
- A 1994 draft speech written by Ellen Merlo (who is currently a senior vice president at Philip Morris) discusses the various threats facing the tobacco industry and simply states, "The second major threat we face is from smoking bans. If smokers can't smoke on the way to work, at work, in stores, banks, restaurants, malls and other public places, they are going to smoke less. Overall cigarette purchases will be reduced and volume decline will accelerate."⁴
- A 1994 speech on Philip Morris USA's "most important priorities for 1994 and 1995" discusses the importance of their accommodation program, "The immediate implications for our business are clear: if our consumers have fewer opportunities to enjoy our products, they will use them less frequently and the result will be an adverse impact on our bottom line."⁵
- Documents from the Tobacco Institute (the former lobbying and public relations arm of the tobacco industry) echo Philip Morris' concern that smoke-free workplace laws will reduce consumption and profits. "What do these health claims, the heightened public sentiment for smoking restrictions, increasing non-smoker annoyance toward smokers mean for this industry? Lower sales, of course. ...restrictive smoking laws accounted for 21 percent of the variation in cigarette consumption from state to state during that time [1961-1982]."⁶

- The Tobacco Institute also examined data in the 1980s to try to gage the impact of smoking restrictions on consumption, “Those who say they work under restrictions smoked about one-and-one quarter fewer cigarettes each day than those who don’t. That may sound light, but remember we’re talking about light restrictions too. ...That one-and-one-quarter per day cigarette reduction then, means nearly 7 billion fewer cigarettes smoked each year because of workplace smoking restrictions. That’s 350 million packs of cigarettes. At a dollar a pack, even the lightest of workplace smoking restrictions is costing this industry 233 million dollars a year in revenue.”⁷
- A 1994 Philip Morris budget document states:

“Currently 47 states have some form of smoking restrictions. Smoking is restricted in private workplaces in 19 states; 28 states restrict smoking in restaurants. This year alone 18 states and 269 localities passed smoking restrictions. Measures are still pending in 6 states and 165 localities. Smoking restrictions have been estimated, this year alone, to have decreased PM profits by \$40 million.”⁸
- And yet another Philip Morris internal documents recognizes that the “Financial impact of smoking bans will be tremendous - three to five fewer cigarettes per day per smoker will reduce annual manufacturer profits a billion dollars plus per year.”⁹

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Related Campaign Fact Sheets [All Campaign factsheets available at <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org>]

Harm to Kids from Secondhand Smoke, <http://tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0104.pdf>

Secondhand Smoke, EPA, and the Courts – Cigarette Company Lawsuits Cannot Change the Facts: Secondhand Smoke is Deadly, <http://tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0038.pdf>

Clean Indoor Air Laws Encourage Smokers To Quit And Discourage Youth From Starting, <http://tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0198.pdf>

Smoke-free Restaurant & Bar Laws Do Not Harm Business, <http://tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0144.pdf>

Ventilation Technology Does Not Protect People From Secondhand Smoke, <http://tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0145.pdf>

¹ Heironimus, J. Impact of Workplace Restrictions on Consumption and Incidence. Philip Morris. January 22, 1992. Bates No.: 2023914280. URL: <http://tobaccodocuments.org/landman/2023914280-4284.html>.

² Heironimus, J. Impact of Workplace Restrictions on Consumption and Incidence. Philip Morris. January 22, 1992. Bates No.: 2023914280. URL: <http://tobaccodocuments.org/landman/2023914280-4284.html>.

³ Heironimus, J. Workplace Restrictions. Philip Morris. April 16, 1992. Bates No.:2023914279. URL: <http://tobaccodocuments.org/pm/2023914279.html>.

⁴ Merlo, E. Untitled Draft Speech. Philip Morris. January 14, 1994. Bates No.: 2044333753/3836. URL: <http://tobaccodocuments.org/pm/2044333814-3836.html>.

⁵ Walls, T. CAC Presentation#4. Philip Morris. August 8, 1994. Bates No.: 2041183751. URL: <http://tobaccodocuments.org/pm/2041183751-3790.html>.

⁶ Public Smoking: The Problem. Tobacco Institute. Undated. Bates No.: TIMN0014554/4565. URL: <http://tobaccodocuments.org/ti/TIMN0014554-4565.html>.

⁷ Public Smoking: The Problem. Tobacco Institute. Undated. Bates No.: TIMN0014554/4565. URL: <http://tobaccodocuments.org/ti/TIMN0014554-4565.html>.

⁸ Corporate Affairs 1994 Budget Presentation. Philip Morris. October 21, 1993. Bates No.: 2045521070 – 2045521111. URL: <http://tobaccodocuments.org/pm/2045521070-1111.html>.

⁹ A Smokers' Alliance: Draft. Philip Morris. August 1, 1993. Bates No.: 2025771934 - 2025771937. URL: <http://tobaccodocuments.org/pm/2025771934-1995.html>.