

## Tobacco - Flavored Cigarettes and Youth Use 2011 - Altria Group, Inc.

WHEREAS, in November, 2010 the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control met. This included representatives of Altria. A key element for discussion involved Article 9 involving regulation of the contents of tobacco products. According to Taco Tuinstra, Editor-in-Chief of the industry magazine, Tobacco Reporter, "the term 'contents of tobacco products' is generally understood to refer to tobacco flavors." He adds "Disturbingly, many in the public health community appear unable to unwilling to distinguish between characterizing and noncharacterizing flavors."

His editorial seems to support the banning of certain additional characterizing flavors that "make cigarettes more attractive to children and thus contribute to smoking uptake."

The United States Food and Drug Administration has shown that the smoking of flavored cigarettes is far more popular among younger people than among older people. It also noted that a March, 2008 poll that found that one in five youngsters between 12-17 had seen flavored tobacco products or ads, while only one in 10 adults reported having seen them. It also showed evidence that youth between 13-18, 52% of smokers who had heard of flavored cigarettes reported interest in trying them and nearly 60% thought that flavored cigarettes would taste better than regular cigarettes."

The FDA also has stated that an important way to reduce the death and disease caused by smoking is to prevent children and adolescents from starting to smoke. Studies have shown that 17 year old smokers are three times as likely to use flavored cigarettes as are smokers over the age of 25. In addition to being more attractive to young people, flavored products make it easier for new smokers to start smoking by masking the unpleasant flavor of tobacco. Studies have also demonstrated that young people believe that flavored tobacco products are safer than unflavored tobacco products.

RESOLVED, that, because youth initiation of tobacco products is influenced by their flavoring, shareholders request that, within six months of Altria's annual meeting, the Board of Directors move to ensure that Altria stops the production of any of its tobacco products with characterizing flavoring added, as well as their distribution and their marketing, unless and until it can be proven by independent and evidence-based research that such added characterizing flavors do not contribute significantly to youth initiation of tobacco use.

Supporting Statement: Characterizing flavored tobacco products are just as addictive and contain the same types of harmful effects as regular tobacco products. Removing these flavored products from the market is important because it removes an avenue used by young people to begin regular tobacco use. Altria management says it does not want to influence young people to use its tobacco products. The FDA has said that the removal from the market of tobacco products that contain certain characterizing flavors is an important step in our Nation's efforts to reduce the burden of illness and death caused by tobacco products. Support for this resolution will be an important step in ensuring that this goal can be achieved.