



THE OFFICIAL SPONSOR OF BIRTHDAYS.™

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

March 18, 2011

By hand

Re: Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Program funding

Dear Governor Cuomo,

Both as Attorney General and now Governor you have shown your commitment to the cause of preventing children from becoming tobacco users and helping adults to quit.

We are seeking your continued support in 2011 – 12 budget negotiations for the Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Program (TCP). The American Cancer Society stands firmly behind your recommendation that the program should be funded at \$58.41 million for FY 2011-2012 and strongly opposes the Assembly's position in its budget resolution to effectively eliminate the program.

In recent years, smoking rates among adults and children fell faster in New York than in the rest of the nation, but disproportionate budget cuts over the last three years that reduced the program's support by 30 percent have been followed by increases in adult and teenage tobacco use rates. There is every possibility that a comprehensive, strategically-designed intervention can reverse these setbacks, but an adequate level of activity must be maintained. This will be done if the appropriation in your Executive Budget is approved.

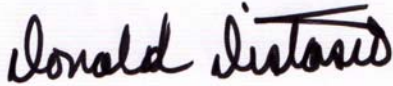
The American Cancer Society has long held that the evidence-based approach of the TCP in reducing tobacco use not only prevents New York's children from starting to smoke, but, as discussed in the recent Medicaid Redesign Team, actually saves Medicaid dollars in the short and long term by encouraging and helping adults to quit.

Between 2003 and 2008 the prevalence of smoking among Medicaid clients declined by one-third, from 39% to 26%, due in no small part to the TCP. This reduction in smoking has led to an **annual savings to New York's Medicaid program of \$503.2 million per year, of which \$387 million is attributable to the program.**

The difference between your plan for the TCP and the Assembly's translates into a 4.6% increase in youth smoking rates. That's 56,000 New York kids who will grow up to be addicted smokers, and 18,000 will die of tobacco-caused disease. It will result in an additional \$980 million in health care costs, of which \$273 million will be paid by Medicaid. To the extent you compromise with the Assembly and reduce funding by an intermediate amount, New York's kids and New York's budget will suffer proportionately.

The American Cancer Society strongly supports your funding of \$58.41 million as a critical step in preventing cancer in New York State.

Thank you for your leadership.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald Distasio". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the name.

Donald Distasio
Chief Executive Officer

cc. Dr. Shah
Mr. Introne