

HARKIN: BAN ON CANDY FLAVORED CIGARETTES GOES INTO EFFECT TODAY

Washington, DC – Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, issued the following statement on the ban on candy flavored cigarettes that goes into effect today. The ban is a provision of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, legislation that will allow the FDA to regulate what tobacco companies put into their products for the first time and dramatically reduce the number of young Americans who become addicted to tobacco. In 1998, Harkin introduced the first comprehensive, bipartisan bill to give the FDA authority to regulate tobacco.

“Today we are seeing the first regulations in a decades-long effort to prevent cigarette smoking and it couldn’t start with a better age group, one of our most vulnerable,” **Harkin said today**. “Banning the marketing and use of strawberry, chocolate and other flavored cigarettes will help slow the rate of addiction among young smokers, preventing disease and saving millions in health care costs down the line. Every day, another 1,000 kids become regular smokers – and roughly one third of them will die as a result. We owe it to them to give them a fair shot and put an end to unethical, insidious marketing techniques that trap them in addiction at a young age.”

Harkin is an original cosponsor of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, which was signed into law in June. In addition to banning candy and fruit flavored cigarettes, the bill bans misleading health claims such as "light" and "low-tar," requires tobacco companies to disclose the contents of tobacco products and empowers the FDA to require changes in tobacco products.

Although tobacco is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, yearly it kills more than 400,000 people and drives up the cost of health care by approximately \$96 billion.

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