

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 17, 2008

William Kovacic
Chairman
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20580

Dear Chairman Kovacic:

We are writing to support the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) proposal to end the use of tar and nicotine statements based on the flawed and inaccurate "Cambridge Filter Method," often referred to as the FTC Test Method. These statements have served as the basis for the misleading and deceptive marketing of "light" and "low-tar" cigarettes by the tobacco industry.

The "Cambridge Filter Method" uses a smoking machine — a "smoking robot" — that smokes every cigarette exactly the same and fails to measure the amount of tar and nicotine received by an actual smoker. According to this method, some cigarettes appear to deliver lower tar and nicotine than regular cigarettes and were assumed to be less harmful than regular cigarettes. These cigarettes have been marketed as "light" and "low-tar."

However, so-called "light" and "low-tar" cigarettes often cause the smoker to receive more tar and nicotine than regular cigarettes. Smokers take longer, deeper puffs and smoke more cigarettes a day to compensate for the lower nicotine levels. Ninety percent of smokers in a recent survey did not know that these cigarettes deliver the same amount or more tar as regular cigarettes.

Consumers deserve accurate and truthful information about tar and nicotine levels in cigarettes, and the FTC's proposal will help accomplish this goal and stop the misleading and deceptive marketing of cigarettes.

Sincerely,


