



American
Public Health
Association

PROTECT, PREVENT, LIVE WELL

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October 2, 2013

The Honorable Michael Froman
United States Trade Representative
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Froman:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals who have championed the health of all people and communities around the world for more than 140 years, I write to urge the administration to ensure that strong tobacco control measures to protect the public's health are preserved in the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement.

In May 2012, the U.S. Trade Representative announced a proposal that would protect a nation's sovereignty in carrying out tobacco control efforts and would recognize the unique, harmful effects of tobacco. It is disappointing that this proposal has since been abandoned. Instead, the new USTR proposal would leave the administration's commitment to reduce tobacco use and ability to implement the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act vulnerable to international trade challenges. Additionally, the new proposal would undermine the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, the world's only public health treaty, and threaten the global health effort to reduce tobacco use worldwide.

Malaysia recently offered a proposal for a complete carve-out of tobacco control measures from the trade agreement, which would grant real protection for participating countries to enact and maintain tobacco use reduction efforts. We encourage the USTR to work with Malaysia and others to support a proposal that provides the greatest protection against future acts of subversion.

Tobacco use continues to be the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. and worldwide, accounting for six million deaths around the world every year. Tobacco use costs our nation \$96 billion in direct medical spending and \$97 billion in lost productivity annually. The TPP agreement provides us with the opportunity to lead the world in reducing the burden of tobacco use-related deaths and diseases here and abroad, and we urge the administration to ensure that the strongest possible public health measures are included in the trade agreement.

I look forward to working with you on this important public health issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Georges C. Benjamin".

Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP, FACEP (E)
Executive Director