

2. POLICY POSITION

ADOLESCENT TOBACCO USE

BACKGROUND

There is unanimous agreement that children should not use tobacco products. Every state in the Union already prohibits the sale of tobacco to underage youth and tobacco is already under federal scrutiny by at least 11 federal departments and agencies. Congress has for 80 years refused to give FDA jurisdiction over tobacco.

Many southern states are heavily dependent upon tobacco tax revenues. This agriculture product is the economic base of not only the farm community but of the businesses, towns, cities and schools it supports. FDA regulations should be reserved only as a last resort after states and the tobacco industry have the opportunity to enforce present legislation and introduce new legislation to address the problem of children using and having access to tobacco products.

RECOMMENDATION

The Southern Legislative Conference urges Congress to seek sensible solutions to the universal concern over youth access to tobacco products. In seeking these solutions, the Southern Legislative Conference urges Congress to restrain regulatory action(s) by FDA of the tobacco industry. States should have the opportunity to enforce present legislation and enact new legislation to correct the access and use of tobacco by minors.

Adopted by the Southern Legislative Conference, August 15, 1995, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

SO-95-PP2