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Democratic Whip



Senate of Pennsylvania

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PA COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

July 11, 2014

Martin J. Barrington,
Chairman and C.E.O.
Altria Group, Inc.
6601 W. Broad Street
Richmond, Va. 23230

Susan M. Cameron,
President and C.E.O.
R.J. Reynolds
401 N Main St
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

Dear Chairman Barrington and President Cameron,

We are writing at this time on behalf of the Pennsylvania Senate Philadelphia Delegation to request a meeting with you and your respective lobbyists immediately. To our knowledge, a meeting was never requested with Senator Shirley Kitchen, Chair of the Philadelphia Delegation or Senator Anthony Williams, sponsor of the cigarette tax bill.

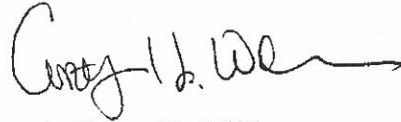
As you are aware, we most recently proposed a \$2 per pack cigarette sales tax in order to close the School District of Philadelphia's \$93 million deficit. The revenue generated from this tax will provide the Philadelphia school children with critical funding. Once enacted, this tax was projected to generate approximately \$45 million this year and \$83 million next year. Nevertheless, the current projection for next year is now reduced to \$69 million because of the delays. After much hard work over the last two years, we were very hopeful that this legislation would finally pass both in our state House and Senate. However, it has come to our attention that you and your agents have been meeting with our colleagues about this legislation, without involving the Philadelphia Delegation members. You may or may not be aware or concerned about the impact of these delays within our communities. Therefore, we have included articles from our Philadelphia newspapers which highlight your role in denying the passage of this critical legislation which would in turn help our schools and the thousands of families who will be impacted by this funding.

If this legislation is not passed, schools will not open on time and many essential personnel will be laid off. Every week that this tax is not enacted, the School District of Philadelphia loses \$1.6 million. The clock is ticking and every day that this is delayed is critically consequential. We do not believe this is how you want yourself or your company represented in this situation. We recommend that a meeting take place right away to address all of these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shirley Kitchen".

Shirley M. Kitchen
Chair, Senate Philadelphia Delegation

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anthony H. Williams".

Anthony H. Williams
Democratic Whip