



William G. Plested III, MD, President

November 6, 2006

Regents of the University of California
Office of the Secretary
1111 Franklin St., 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Regents:

The American Medical Association understands that the Regents are considering a policy that would eliminate the acceptance of research funding from the tobacco industry. This is an important issue and one that has received much needed attention from other academic institutions as well as health and medical associations.

On behalf of the American Medical Association, we urge your board to move quickly to adopt this policy. The University of California has a reputation for conducting some of the highest quality research on health; especially in the area of tobacco control and smoking cessation. By continuing to accept tobacco industry dollars, at a time when others are distancing themselves from links to that industry, you run the risk of diminishing your reputation.

The tobacco industry documents, which as you know are housed at the University of California San Francisco, offer a veritable history lesson on the tobacco industry and its tactics to subvert science and to purchase credibility through support of public institutions and researchers. According to the tobacco industry's own documents, they hired firms to establish bogus research institutes and think tanks. They also funded misleading research to confuse the public and provide law makers with the opportunity to vote against important public health measures. (<http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu>)

In 2004, the AMA House of Delegates adopted a comprehensive corporate policy on tobacco. This policy recommends divestment of tobacco stocks and urges medical schools and universities as well as scientific publications to decline support from the tobacco industry.

Given the discussions that the AMA House of Delegates engaged in on this issue, I fully understand the complexities of this decision for an institution such as the University of California. I am proud that this was adopted by the governing body of the AMA and I hope that your board will move quickly and come to the same conclusion: institutions that develop and promote scientific interventions to reduce the toll of tobacco use, should not accept funding from tobacco companies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William G. Plested III, MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with some loops and flourishes.

William G. Plested, III, MD

Enclosure

cc: Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante
Robert Dynes, PhD, President
John Oakley, LLD, Chair, Academic Senate

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