

May 3, 2007

Superintendent Jack O'Connell
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
1430 N Street, Suite 5602
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

Dear Superintendent and Regent O'Connell:

In late March, UCSF Vice Chancellor and Medical School Dean David Kessler and former federal prosecutor Sharon Eubanks sent Regent Blum a letter (copy enclosed) about tobacco industry funding of research explaining why supporting RE-89 was a necessary and important decision by the Regents. They bring to light important details about tobacco industry strategies that undermine academic research that have been left out of the debate within the UC administration and faculty.

In addition, eminent scholars from UC's peer institutions make their case for a Regental decision to stop taking money from the tobacco industry in a two-page advertisement in the May 4 edition of *Chronicles of Higher Education*, also enclosed for your consideration.

The signed advertisement spotlights the August 2006 federal court finding that the tobacco industry violated the RICO Act. (Signers include the original author of the Act.) The court also exposed the *tobacco industry's on-going, deliberate subversion of academic research in the service of massive fraud*. The advertisement expresses surprise at UC's hesitation in the face of tobacco industry money. Will UC keep taking money from the tobacco industry when it costs UC support from the public and the trust of its professional peers?

Signers include scholars from some of the many universities and research centers that have already made the ethical decision to refuse tobacco industry money, a policy reform that has been spreading worldwide for more than a decade. At these institutions, research is still flourishing and academic freedom remains untrammelled. (In short, there has not been any "slippery slope.") This evidence has also been ignored in UC's internal discussion thus far.

RE-89 is not about the way an industry makes its money, abhorrent as that is in the case of the tobacco industry, projected to kill a billion human beings in this century. Rather, as the profound concern of the ad signers shows you, it is about the fear that the University will sell itself so cheap and do so much harm in the bargain. It is about a powerful industry's on-going design to manipulate, exploit and ultimately degrade independent institutions, like UC, which should be dedicated to the public interest. It is about standards. Protect the University. Please vote in favor of RE-89.

Sincerely,

Kimberlee Homer Vagadori
Campaign to Defend Academic Integrity
UC Davis Alumna

Encl: Chronicle of Higher Education Advertisement
Letter to Chairman Blum from Vice Chancellor and Dean Kessler and Ms. Eubanks