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**MPAA Ratings Policy is Disappointing
And Falls Short of Real Action to Reduce Smoking in Movies
Statement of Matthew L. Myers
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WASHINGTON, DC (May 10, 2007) - We are deeply disappointed that the movie ratings policy announced today by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) falls short of the real change needed to reduce youth exposure to smoking in the movies. This policy fails to implement the recommendation by numerous public health organizations that any new movie with non-historical smoking be rated R.

The MPAA needs to establish meaningful, objective standards that produce measurable reductions in smoking in the movies. Instead, it has adopted a highly subjective policy that calls for the Film Ratings Board to “consider smoking” when rating movies and states that movies “may” receive a higher rating because of pervasive or glamorized smoking.

Smoking in the movies is a serious public health concern that requires much stronger action than what the MPAA has done today. Studies have found that smoking is far more prevalent in movies than in real life and is presented in a considerably more positive way. The depiction of smoking in the movies reinforces tobacco industry marketing and contributes in a significant way to youth tobacco use. It is disappointing that the MPAA’s action falls far short of the seriousness of the problem.