

(Insert Your AG's Name Here) ASKS HOLLYWOOD TO ADD ANTI-SMOKING MESSAGE TO DVDS

Attorney General (insert your AG's name here) announced today that **he/she** has asked Hollywood's major motion picture studios to insert anti-smoking public service announcements in all DVDs, videos and other newer home viewing formats of movies in which smoking is depicted. Attorney General **(insert your AG's name here)**'s letter also is signed by 31 other Attorneys General***.

(Insert your AG's name here)'s letter is prompted by the November 7, 2005 publication of the most recent study to find that adolescents with the greatest exposure to depictions of smoking in movies were almost three times more likely to try smoking than their peers in the least exposed group, even after controlling for other known smoking initiation factors. The study, which appeared in the journal Pediatrics and was conducted by the Dartmouth Medical School with National Cancer Institute funding, is the first to determine the effects of viewing smoking in movies on a nationally representative sample of youth in the United States.

Attorney General **(insert your AG's name here)**'s letter also notes that an anti-smoking Public Service Announcement (PSA) currently is being produced by the American Legacy Foundation, founded with money from the states' 1998 tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (MSA), in conjunction with Hollywood's Entertainment Industry Foundation and the Will Rogers Institute to run in theaters across this country. Citing the scientific evidence that airing an anti-smoking PSA lessens the effects on youth from viewing movie smoking, **(insert your AG's name here)** told the studios that they "can dramatically increase the number of young people who will receive that anti-smoking message by attaching it to DVD, video and other home viewing format movies (such as Universal Media Discs, "UMDs")" that the studios distribute in which smoking is depicted.

"For the past two years we have been meeting and talking with the movie studios and other members of the movie industry, providing them first hand access to the scientists who have studied the impact of movie smoking on youth, and seeking their cooperation in eliminating tobacco brand appearances and reducing youth exposure to smoking depictions in movies. Now, we have the availability of an anti-smoking PSA created by the experts, and the compelling data from the latest smoking in movies study. Given the increasing number of movies on DVDs, videos and now UMDs, the timing is right to ask each of the studios to take this specific action to help protect kids from the effects of viewing smoking in the movies they watch at home," Attorney General **(insert your AG's name here)** said.

Optional background graphs:

In 2003, 28 Attorneys General sent a letter to the president of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), citing a Dartmouth study finding that a reduction in the

prevalence of cigarette smoking in movies could drastically decrease the initiation of smoking in youth.

Attorneys General also held a historic meeting with members of the Directors Guild of America's Social Responsibility Task Force, the president of the MPAA, and production executives of the seven major studios in 2003. The Attorneys General expressed concern that under the tobacco MSA, tobacco companies may not pay to have their products appear in film. However, studies indicated the continued portrayal of glamorized smoking and the appearance of cigarette brand names in film and television.

In 1998, the National Association of Attorneys General passed a resolution asking actors and actresses and the motion picture industry to take steps to reduce use of tobacco by children under 18. The resolution, citing tobacco-related illnesses and deaths caused by underage smoking, called upon members of the motion picture industry to voluntarily review the use of cigars and cigarettes in film to eliminate or reduce use of tobacco and tobacco products; and to consider establishing and maintaining public education programs and other activities specifically designed to discourage children from ever using tobacco and tobacco products.

***Maryland, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Iowa, Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Northern Mariana Islands, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin and West Virginia.