WAIT UNTIL TAXPAYERS HEAR ABOUT HOLLYWOOD’S QUIET LITTLE BILLION-DOLLAR BAILOUT. AND HOW IT RECRUITS MORE THAN A MILLION KIDS TO SMOKE.

Hollywood did not win federal stimulus money. Instead, it’s the states competing for film projects that are offering producers and studios an estimated $1.4 billion in public subsidies.

Including, last year, an estimated $830 million for movies with smoking, most rated PG-13.

And that’s the problem. Because more than 1.3 million members of Hollywood’s eager adolescent audience are smokers who started smoking because of the tobacco imagery they see on screen.

Ultimately, that tobacco imagery will kill about 400,000 of them.

Taxpayers care deeply about youth smoking prevention. States spent $719 million to battle smoking this year. And polls show that the majority of adults favors making kid-rated movies smokefree.

What will happen when the public finds out that state governments are spending more on films that push smoking than they spend on programs that help kids resist?

It would be smarter to R-rate future films with smoking than to risk billions in future public financing. What studio doesn’t see that?