



May 29, 2007

The Honourable Tony Clement, P.C., M.P.  
Minister  
Health Canada  
Postal Locator 0916A  
Brooke Claxton Building, 16th Floor  
Tunney's Pasture  
Ottawa ON K1A 0K9

Dear Minister Clement:

**SUBJECT: *Renewal of Health Canada's Tobacco Control Funding***

On behalf of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon and the BC Lung Association, which make up the Clean Air Coalition of BC, we are writing to urge you to renew funding for the final five years of the Tobacco Control Strategy at the Treasury Board meeting in June, 2007.

The Tobacco Control Strategy was launched in 2001 as a ten-year commitment by the federal government to battle the issue of tobacco use in Canada, and the funding committed by the federal government for the first five years of the Strategy has gone a long way to reducing tobacco use among Canadians. From 2001 to 2006, the number of Canadian smokers has dropped by over one million, the number of teens who smoke fell by 30%, and the number of homes where children are exposed to second-hand smoke fell by 70%.

While the first five years of the Strategy has been a success, there is still much work to be done, and reducing tobacco funding prior to the ten year commitment will only defeat the goals that have been achieved to date. For the past 14 months, funding for the final five years of the Tobacco Control Programme's (TCP) Tobacco Control Strategy has been under review resulting in the TCP being reduced to conducting short-term activities without a longer term vision. The failure to complete the positive review and renewal of the TCP in a timely manner has left the Strategy in virtual suspension. The TCP's loss of authority to fund grants and contributions as of March 31, 2007, has had in turn an immediate negative impact on the public health community's capacity to contribute meaningfully to the tobacco control battle, which could be permanently in jeopardy without continuation of the funding for the Strategy.

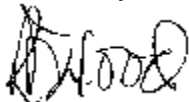
Tobacco control is a dynamic process and the tobacco control community cannot rest on its laurels. Failure to renew funding to the Programme's Strategy can have the adverse effect of increased smoking rates and the negative health outcomes associated with tobacco use. Conversely, renewal of funding for the final five years of the Strategy will improve public health and exceed the Strategy's original goals by making Canada a healthier nation.

Specifically in British Columbia, about 16 people die each day from tobacco related illnesses, and each year, that translates into over 6,000 people. Given the magnitude and enormity of tobacco use, we strongly encourage you to renew funding for the final five years of the TCP's Tobacco Control Strategy to continue to effect positive change in the public health of Canadians.

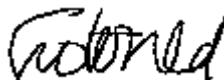
We would be pleased to discuss this issue with you further and encourage you to contact our Director, Mr. Jack Boomer at 250-721-4268.

Thank you for your consideration on this public health challenge.

Sincerely,



R.F. Bobbe Wood, MA  
President & CEO  
Heart and Stroke Foundation  
of BC & Yukon



Scott McDonald  
Executive Director  
BC Lung Association

cc. Mr. Bill King, Chief of Staff  
Dr. Jo Kennelly, Director of Policy  
Jack Boomer, Director, Clean Air Coalition of BC