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TOBACCO COMPANIES ORDERED TO PUBLISH “CORRECTIVE STATEMENT” ADVERTISEMENTS

Statement from the Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida



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TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Eleven years after a federal court order, the four major U.S. tobacco companies – Altria, R.J. Reynolds, Lorillard and Philip Morris USA – began publishing “corrective statement” advertisements about the dangers of their deadly and addictive products on Nov. 26, 2017.

These corrective statements represent a remarkable milestone in the fight against tobacco. Millions of Americans are addicted to cigarettes and other tobacco products, which are known to be the single most preventable cause of death and disease in the United States. This is a result of efforts by the tobacco companies to deceive the public about their harmful products, and the billions of dollars spent each year to aggressively market them to specific and vulnerable populations, including minors.

In 1999, the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) sued tobacco manufacturers and tobacco trade organizations for civil fraud and racketeering violations. Federal District Court Judge Gladys Kessler issued a landmark ruling in 2006, finding that the tobacco companies lied to the American people about the health effects of smoking. These corrective statements are a result of this ruling and will force the industry to acknowledge the following in television and print advertising:

- Adverse Health Effects of Smoking
- Addictiveness of Smoking and Nicotine
- Lack of Significant Health Benefit from Smoking “Low Tar” or “Light” Cigarettes
- Manipulation of Cigarette Design and Composition to Ensure Optimum Nicotine Delivery
- Adverse Health Effects of Exposure to Secondhand Smoke

While the industry was fighting this ruling over the past decade, The Florida Department of Health and Tobacco Free Florida has been diligently working to protect the public from the dangers of tobacco use. Since it was established in 2007, more than 188,000 Floridians have successfully quit tobacco using Tobacco Free Florida’s free resources.¹ The program has resulted in a significant decrease in smoking rates among both adults and teens in the state, leading to billions of dollars and countless lives saved. Since the program’s hard-hitting advertising launched, quit attempts across the state have increased and the campaign has been linked to reducing relapses among those who quit. Exposure to the program’s message has also caused positive shifts in smokers’ attitudes towards quitting.²

While the program has made significant progress, there is still more work to be done. The fact remains that while this admission by these tobacco companies is long overdue, tobacco is still the same deadly, product it has been for generations and still pose a significant threat to public

health. Although the smoking rate in Florida is low overall, there are new and emerging tobacco products that have risen in popularity, especially among our youth.³ Smoking causes more than 480,000 deaths each year in the United States and remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Florida and the U.S.⁴

For individuals looking to quit, Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way program makes it easier than ever for tobacco users to access free tools and services to help. For more information, please visit tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway. Tobacco Free Florida also administers a youth prevention campaign, THE FACTS NOW, which provides facts and information about Big Tobacco's marketing practices and the adverse effects of tobacco products to Florida's teens and young adults.

About Tobacco Free Florida

The department's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Since the program began in 2007, more than 188,000 Floridians have successfully quit using one of Tobacco Free Florida's free tools and services. There are now approximately 451,000 fewer adult smokers in Florida than there was 10 years ago, and the state has saved \$17.7 billion in health care costs.⁵ To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way services, visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com or follow the campaign on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida or on Twitter at www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla.

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¹ Professional Data Analysis, 2017.

²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs—2014. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.

³ Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2016.

⁴ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.

⁵Mann, Nathan M, Nonnemaker, James M., Thompson, Jesse. "Smoking-Attributable Health Care Costs in Florida and Potential Health Care Cost Savings Associated with Reductions in Adult Smoking Prevalence." 2016.