

Thanks, Ellen.

We have invited you here today for a very specific reason, to discuss a very real problem.

As Ellen indicated, the New York City Council is currently debating a public smoking bill which would severely limit the number of places where smokers could enjoy a cigarette in our city. In fact, the bill would amount to a virtual smoking ban in almost all restaurants and workplaces.

Clearly, if this proposal is enacted in its present form, it would pose a significant problem for Philip Morris. When consumers lose the right to smoke in public, sales of cigarettes decrease, and that directly affects our bottom line.

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