

NAPHP NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY
23 Pheasant Way South Burlington, Vermont 05401 802-658-0136

Milton Terris
President
Dan E. Beauchamp
President-Elect
Allen N. Koplin
Vice-President
Robert Barrie
Secretary
Susan S. Addiss
Treasurer

Mr. George Schweitzer
Vice-President,
Communications
CBS Broadcast Group
51 West 52nd Street
New York, N.Y., 10019

January 25, 1985

Dear Mr. Schweitzer:

I am writing concerning the Public Service Announcement regarding smoking in pregnancy. The PSA portrays a fetus clutching a cigarette, and CBS has refused to screen it on the grounds that it is "too graphic". I am surprised and dismayed at this decision. I have seen the ad; it is graphic. It is also riveting, disturbing, and frightening. It may even be graphic enough to dissuade a pregnant woman from smoking.

Smoking in pregnancy is one of the most dangerous behaviors one can attempt. The fetus is chronically exposed to oxygen starvation and carbon monoxide poisoning. As a consequence, women who smoke have a much greater risk of miscarriage, premature delivery, and birth of growth-retarded babies.

Why do these women smoke? Perhaps because few people tell them not to. Perhaps the warning from their physician is too little and too late, when compared to a billion dollar a year advertising campaign which has already convinced them that smoking will keep them slim, enhance their sex appeal, and make them popular. Mass media has promoted that image, and done little to counter that - consider the number of glamorous and successful women role-models seen smoking on your prime-time television shows.

85696795