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NEWS

L.F. Payne, Jr. CONGRESSMAN

5TH DISTRICT
VIRGINIA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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PAYNE INTRODUCES BILL TO BAR NEW TOBACCO REGULATIONS

19 House Members Cosponsor Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Fifth District Congressman L.F. Payne introduced legislation Thursday to prohibit the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) from issuing new regulations governing the sale or use of tobacco products. The bill was cosponsored by 19 members of the House.

Payne said the bill would block a series of controversial new tobacco regulations that the FDA proposed in August. The proposed regulations include new restrictions on cigarette advertising; a ban on vending machine sales of cigarettes; the creation of an industry-financed \$150 million fund to educate minors not to smoke; restrictions on industry sponsored sporting events; a federal ban on all cigarette sales to minors; and the classification of nicotine as a drug.

"The purpose of this bill is simply to block the Food and Drug Administration from gaining control over tobacco," Payne explained. "If given the power to regulate tobacco, then there is no telling where the agency would stop. I am concerned that the proposals announced last month are simply a first step toward an outright ban on tobacco products."

"This legislation is not intended to thwart legitimate efforts to eliminate youth smoking," he continued. "Everyone agrees that minors should not smoke cigarettes or dip snuff. All 50 states have enacted laws to prohibit youth smoking, and the industry itself has launched new programs to deal with this problem."

Payne predicted that his bill will enjoy widespread bipartisan support.

Many members of Congress are concerned, he said, that the proposed regulations are inconsistent with the expressed will of Congress, which has steadfastly refused to broaden the FDA's mission to include the regulation of the domestic tobacco industry.

"As the representative of more than 5,000 tobacco growers, I know that these hard-working farm families only want Washington to treat them fairly. These proposals are not fair. They are a back-door attempt by the FDA to gain control over the tobacco industry. The bill I have introduced will stop the FDA from doing that."

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