

Good afternoon. Let me begin by stating a simple truth:

Philip Morris USA believes now, and always has believed, that minors should not smoke nor should they have access to our cigarettes.

Many words are spoken about the issue of youth smoking. We believe that the critical issue is that in too many places in America, minors can still buy cigarettes. The only way to lick this problem is to attack the issue of access.

The best way to keep kids away from cigarettes is to keep cigarettes away from kids.

That is why today we are launching a new initiative called Action Against Access. We are launching it because we want to make a difference on the issue of youth smoking.

Let's get to the heart of the issue. Let's make a real difference. Let's make it as difficult as we can for kids to buy cigarettes.

Action Against Access is a comprehensive voluntary program on youth access. It addresses many of the most significant components of the agenda proposed by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences in their recommendations on youth access to cigarettes.

We believe Action Against Access underscores our commitment to ensure that minors have no access to cigarettes. And we know that the overwhelming majority of the retail community agrees with us and shares that commitment. That is why we can work together to achieve all of the goals of this program.