



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Research Explorer

Tobacco companies set up smokescreen over lobbying activity.

Citation for published version:

Gilmore, A, Fooks, G, Smith, K & Collin, J Tobacco companies set up smokescreen over lobbying activity..

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publisher Rights Statement:

© Gilmore, A., Fooks, G., Smith, K., & Collin, J. Tobacco companies set up smokescreen over lobbying activity.

General rights

Copyright for the publications made accessible via the Edinburgh Research Explorer is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

The University of Edinburgh has made every reasonable effort to ensure that Edinburgh Research Explorer content complies with UK legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact openaccess@ed.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



Letters

Tobacco companies set up smokescreen over lobbying activity

The Guardian, Wednesday 20 January 2010

Reading Chris Proctor's claims that British American Tobacco supports evidence-based public health regulations and "transparent" consultation processes is like peering into an alternate universe (Letters, 16 January). Our paper, which he refers to and is publicly available at PLoS Medicine, shows that BAT reshaped EU policymaking procedures to expressly prevent such regulation and did so by recruiting a series of more credible partners to front its campaign and obscure its involvement (Tobacco corporations lobby to hamper passing of EU health laws, say academics, 12 January). It does not, as Proctor misleadingly claims, outline who should be allowed to voice an opinion to policymakers.

Our study is just the latest contribution to a giant mosaic of evidence that demonstrates the tobacco industry has consistently attempted to manipulate science and policy, which has left the industry's reputation as a credible partner in policymaking in tatters. Proctor's letter should therefore be seen as another attempt by BAT to regain its seat at the policy table to stymie any regulatory intervention that could genuinely reduce tobacco use.

Dr Anna Gilmore, Dr Gary Fooks, Dr Katherine Smith *University of Bath*, **Dr Jeff Collin** *University of Edinburgh*

- It is ironic that, in response to the paper showing how BAT, working behind the scenes, shaped the framework to prevent effective health regulation of secondhand smoke and tobacco advertising, BAT's chief scientist protests that the company supports transparency. BAT, like the rest of the industry, is anything but transparent. Indeed, last year, US courts of appeal upheld a massive verdict that the major cigarette companies, including BAT, created an illegal racketeering "enterprise" to defraud the public. Most important, the courts found that the racketeering activities were continuing and likely to continue in the future.

The PLoS paper shows the corrosive effect that the tobacco companies have not only on health, but also on the very process of governance.

Stanton Glantz

Professor of medicine, University of California San Francisco

• Milton Friedman once wrote: "Few trends could so thoroughly undermine the very foundations of our free society as the acceptance by corporate officials of a social responsibility other than to make as much money for their shareholders as possible." Lung cancer, the world's leading cause of cancer death thanks to tobacco industry marketing, was a rare disease just 80 years ago. Chris Proctor's Orwellian talk of being an active "stakeholder" in future regulation is nothing more than his company's bidding to ensure that any form of regulation which has the slightest chance of further reducing demand will be quietly eviscerated.

Professor Simon Chapman

School of public health, Sydney University

More from the guardian

Ban tipping: this custom is awkward, unfair and just plain bad economics 19 Mar 2014

SF newcomers invade Arthur C Clarke award shortlist 18 Mar 2014

This Boris Johnson obsession could ruin the Tories' chances in 2015 19 Mar 2014

Former Credit Suisse trader fined £700,000 for rigging price of UK bonds 20 Mar 2014

China's Alibaba plans \$15bn US listing in biggest IPO since Facebook 16 Mar 2014

More from around the web

Seven amazing Windows 7 tips to get more done (Microsoft Business)

Budget 2014: Drinkers raise a toast to Osborne as 1p is cut off a pint (Daily Express)

How to get rich slowly (Hargreaves Lansdown)

Do's and Don'ts when discussing money with your partner (Money Advice Service)

Death of the pension: enter equity release (All About You)

© 2014 Guardian News and Media Limited or its affiliated companies. All rights reserved.