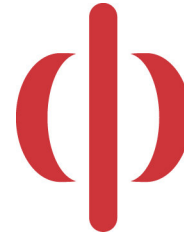


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**RESPIRATORY
HEALTH
ASSOCIATIONSM**
of Metropolitan Chicago

June 23, 2009

Local Charity Invited to White House for FDA Tobacco Legislation Signing

Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago (RHAMC) was invited to the White House to attend the signing of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act yesterday. This historic legislation will give the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authority to regulate tobacco products.

In recognition of the Chicago based organization's long commitment to tobacco control, Joel Africk, RHAMC's President and CEO traveled to Washington at the invitation of the White House. The organization has been working for over twenty years toward this legislation and similar tobacco control policies.

"We applaud President Obama, Senator Durbin and all of Congress for the foresight in passing this legislation. It represents a huge blow to this deadly industry. Thousands of lives and many millions of dollars in healthcare costs will be saved by FDA regulation of tobacco," said Joel Africk. "It was a great honor to witness history as this bill became law."

The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act will mandate larger health warnings on packages, detailed ingredient disclosure and require tobacco companies to fund the FDA regulation. This act also empowers the FDA to require changes in tobacco products, such as the removal or reduction of harmful ingredients.

This new law includes specific restrictions on youth access to tobacco and marketing including limits on advertising near school and prohibiting certain sponsorships and giveaways. The FDA may also ban candied or flavored tobacco products that are clearly geared towards youth.

While it is commonly known that smoking causes lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and heart disease the U.S. Surgeon General has found that smoking causes diseases in nearly every organ of the body. The economic burden of tobacco is staggering with an estimated cost of \$4 billion in tobacco-related health care costs in Illinois alone.

"Tobacco use leads to a staggering number of deadly diseases and medical complications," said Joel Africk. "This law will save millions from the healthcare burden of tobacco use and most importantly, save lives."

Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago (RHAMC) has been a local public health leader since 1906. Today the Association fights lung disease and promotes healthy lungs by supporting research, advocacy, and educational efforts on behalf of individuals and families affected by lung cancer, asthma, COPD (chronic bronchitis and emphysema), and other lung diseases. For more information, visit www.lungchicago.org.

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Leader Since 1906

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