"MILTON, Anne" <anne.milton.mp@parliament.uk>
25/06/2012 14:33

    To
    MSPHTemp/PR-OFF/DOH/GB@DOH
    cc

    Subject
    FW: Philip Morris reports against plain standardised tobacco packs

Hi, please see the below email.

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If you want to see what Anne is up to in Guildford, Parliament or just what she
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http://twitter.com/annemiltonmp

From: ████████████████ [mailto:████████████████@ash.org.uk]
Sent: 25 June 2012 14:32
To: MILTON, Anne
Subject: Philip Morris reports against plain standardised tobacco packs

Dear Mrs Milton
On 13 June an article in the FT headlined 'Philip Morris hits at UK over plain
packs' highlighted two reports commissioned by the company - the first saying
that the DH evidence review was unreliable and the second that plain packs
would make counterfeiting easier and lead to an increase in tobacco smuggling.
There is no hard evidence in either report to justify these conclusions.
The real reason behind the industry's campaign against plain, standardised
packaging is that it will prevent tobacco manufacturers using the pack as a
promotional tool to recruit new smokers.
Plain standardised packs can be designed to make them just as difficult to
counterfeit as current packaging, with covert markings making them easily
distinguishable from counterfeit packs.
A presentation on the PMI funded 'Transcrime' report on the illicit trade is
being given on Tuesday 26th June at 1pm in Committee Room 20. Here is some
information in advance of that meeting.
Plain packaging of tobacco products - what it is and why it is needed
Smoking remains the major preventable cause of premature death and disease in
the UK, with half of all long term smokers dying from their addiction. Smoking
is an addiction of childhood with two thirds of smokers taking up the habit
before the age of 18. The overall economic cost of smoking was estimated at
just under £14 billion a year in 2010.
Plain, standardised packaging of tobacco products would prevent tobacco
companies using the pack to promote the product. Plain packaging means
removing logos and branding from packets, with product name in a standard font
and pack and contents in a standard shape, size and colour, with larger health

warnings. Tax stamps and other markings would remain. Contrary to the PMI funded report there is a large body of peer reviewed evidence which concludes that plain packs:
are less attractive to young people
strengthen the impact of health warnings
make the packs less misleading – cigarettes in light coloured packs are widely perceived as being less harmful.
Counterfeit tobacco is not more harmful
The Transcrime report argues that 'counterfeit tobacco products have been proved to cause even more serious damage to human health' than legal cigarettes. This is simply not true, indeed research by the Canadian government has concluded that contraband tobacco poses the same risk of harmful health effects as legal cigarettes. All smoked tobacco contains thousands of toxic substances many of which are carcinogenic. All smoked tobacco products are deadly.

The report contains no evidence that plain, standardised packaging will increase illicit tobacco sales
There is no hard evidence in the report that plain packaging would lead to any increase in the illicit trade in tobacco. Tobacco packs are already easily counterfeited which is why the industry agreed from 2007 on to put covert markings on all tobacco packs to distinguish between authentic and counterfeit products. Plain packs may not have current colourful branding, but they will have all the health warnings and other markings required on current packs.
A previous report by Transcrime also funded by Philip Morris argued that there is a high risk that display bans could lead to an increase in the illicit trade thereby harming the retail trade. A fact not mentioned in the report was that in Ireland tobacco duty revenues increased by almost €50 million following the display ban coming into force there.
UK Government anti-smuggling strategies have halved the size of the illicit market over the last decade
The tobacco industry repeatedly claims that illicit tobacco is a growing problem. In fact, the market share of illicit cigarettes has halved over the last decade from 21% to 10% and the illicit market of handrolled tobacco is now falling too. This fall was as a result of a tough anti-smuggling strategy which required the tobacco industry to control its supply chain and prevent cigarettes from being diverted to the smuggled market. The updated strategy published last year committed increased resources to further drive down the illicit trade in tobacco.
This substantial fall in illicit tobacco has been achieved at the same time as tobacco taxes have continued to rise year on year. Smoking prevalence has declined significantly over the same time period with the reduction in affordability being part of a comprehensive strategy to reduce smoking prevalence which has included the ban on tobacco advertising and promotion, the introduction of large and graphic health warnings, smokefree public places and the increase in the legal age of sale of tobacco from 16 to 18. Plain packaging is the obvious next step in protecting children from tobacco marketing.
Please let us know if you have any questions.
Best wishes,

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