



Park West Health System, Inc.
www.parkwestmed.org

June 20, 2008

Rianna Brown
Director, Office of External Affairs
Baltimore City Health Department
210 Guilford Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Ms. Brown:

I am writing on behalf of Park West Health System, Inc. in support of the proposed regulation to limit the sale of cigars to packages of five or more. Park West is a federally qualified health center that has served the communities of Baltimore for over thirty six years. We provide comprehensive primary care services across the spectrum of life cycles and thus bear witness and give testimony to the health risk of smoking. The health care providers and staff of Park West are alarmed by the increasing promotion to and use by youth and young adults of cheap, flavored cigars that have nicotine levels and tobacco amounts much higher than cigarettes.

We are in strong support of Baltimore City Health Department efforts to heighten community awareness of the increased health risk of these cigars and efforts to limit access to them especially for our young people. Park West believes the proposed regulation is a common sense and reasonable approach to diminishing the negative health impact of these tobacco products and is fair in that more expensive cigars and those sold in tobacco shops would be exempt from the restrictions.

Park West agrees with the Health Department's assessment that this regulation would significantly reduce youth access to harmful tobacco products and enthusiastically support its adoption.

Sincerely,

Lawrence B. Johnson, MD, FAAP
Chief Medical Officer

cc: Allen J. Bennett, PD, MPH

Park West Medical Center
4120 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215
(410) 764-2266
Fax: (410) 358-7413

Park West Medical Center
Central Office
3319 West Belvedere Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215
(410) 542-7800
Fax: (410) 542-5279

The Men and Family Health Center
4151 Park Heights Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
(443) 874-5502
Fax: (443) 874-5506

**Sinai Community Care &
Greenspring Pediatric Associates**
5101 Lanier Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215
(410) 601-9300
Fax: (410) 601-8741