

**COMMENTS ON BALTIMORE CITY'S PROPOSED  
CIGARETTE FIRE SAFETY STANDARD REGULATIONS**

University of Maryland School of Law  
Center for Tobacco Regulation, Litigation, and Advocacy  
*Kathleen Dachele, Director, (410)706-1294*

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Please accept the following comments in support of the proposed regulation requiring that cigarettes sold in Baltimore City to meet certain fire safety standards.

***Cigarettes meeting fire safety standards are a simple, cheap, and effective way to reduce the injury, death, and expense resulting from cigarette-caused fires.*** Although the cigarette fire safety standard proposed can be met in various ways, paper-banding is the method most frequently used by tobacco manufacturers. To meet the fire safety standard, rings of ultra-thin paper are added to traditional cigarettes to act as speed bumps. These speed bumps reduce the speed of the cigarette burn and diminish significantly the likelihood that an unattended cigarette will ignite a fire.

***Pass it and they will come: Manufacturers readily comply with the law; hundreds of brands have been certified for sale in New York and other states.*** New York was the first state to mandate that cigarettes sold in the state meet fire safety standards. The relevant regulations went into effect in June 2004 and caused no impact on cigarette availability, sales or price; the State has had no enforcement issues to date. The availability of cigarettes has not been affected in New Hampshire, Vermont, Oregon, and California, where fire safe cigarette legislation is effective. Sixteen additional states have passed legislation that will become effective throughout 2008 and 2009. That meeting the fire safety standard across the country, let alone in one municipality, is feasible is evidenced by the recent announcement of R.J. Reynolds that the company will sell only fire safe cigarettes in the U.S. by the end of 2009.

***Cigarette-caused fires are almost exclusively residential, and residential fires are among the most dangerous type that firefighters confront. Fewer cigarette-caused fires means fewer opportunities for firefighters to risk life and limb when answering calls.*** The benefits of the City's proposed regulations are recognized by the fire service organizations that supported passage of HB 785 (2007) in the Maryland General Assembly, including the State Fire Marshal, Maryland State Firemen's Association, the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Foundation, Professional Firefighters of Maryland, Trauma Foundation, National Fire Protection Association, and many local fire departments and individual firefighters. Cigarette-caused fires continue to cause death, injury and economic damage in Baltimore City. Six Baltimore City residents perished in cigarette-caused fires in 2006—more than one-third of the cigarette-caused fire deaths in the State last year. Sadly, the City lost five lives in such fires in 2005 as well.

***Because the State law does not go into effect until July 1, 2008, the City regulations offer a public safety benefit to City residents in the short term. I encourage the Health Department to vigorously pursue adoption of the proposed regulations.***