



Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Health



Office of the Director

September 05, 2014

Larry J. Merlo
President and Chief Executive Officer
CVS Health
One CVS Drive
Woonsocket, Rhode Island 02895

Dear Mr. Merlo,

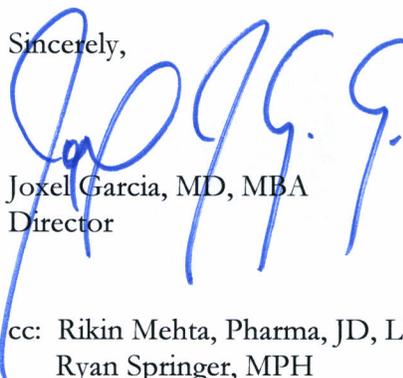
On behalf of the DC Department of Health (DOH) and the residents of the District of Columbia, we are writing this letter to commend you on your momentous decision to cease the sale of cigars, cigarettes and chewing tobacco in CVS stores nationwide, effective October 1, 2014. As we look to promote healthy choices to improve health outcomes for those who live in the District of Columbia, we salute your leadership as a prime example of corporate responsibility.

As you may know, tobacco use continues to be the leading cause of preventable death. In response to the reality that more than 480,000 American lives are lost each year as a result of tobacco, the District of Columbia adopted a smoke-free workplace law, which was enacted in 2006. The law prohibits smoking in most public places, essentially protecting the public from second-hand smoke exposure, and greatly contributes to our smoking cessation efforts. The removal of tobacco from all 25 District of Columbia CVS stores is 25 less opportunities to access these harmful products.

We share the responsibility of maintaining a healthy environment. Evidence shows that each action we take to promote a smoke-free environment has long-lasting health benefits. Removing tobacco products from behind the counter also eliminates the visibility to our youth and is a significant step toward creating a smoke-free generation.

Again, we thank you for your public health leadership.

Sincerely,



Joxel Garcia, MD, MBA
Director

cc: Rikin Mehta, Pharma, JD, LLM
Ryan Springer, MPH