

## **ASPPH Statement on the “Foundation for a Smoke Free World” Funded by Philip Morris International**

November 28, 2017

The Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) and its member institutions are in the forefront of the effort to control tobacco use and, eventually, to eliminate its harm. We are all too aware of the decades-long effort by the tobacco industry to subvert reasonable tobacco control public policy by creating scientific uncertainty about tobacco’s ill effects<sup>1</sup>. The results are staggering: the World Health Organization estimates that more than 100 million people died from tobacco use in the last century and more than 1 billion people worldwide could die of tobacco-related causes this century unless urgent action is taken<sup>2</sup>.

The tobacco industry’s history colors ASPPH’s reaction to the establishment<sup>3</sup> of a new “Foundation for a Smoke-Free World,” funded exclusively by Philip Morris International (PMI) with a pledge of \$80 million a year over the next dozen years. With annual revenues of \$75 billion<sup>4</sup>, this is a minor investment by PMI, a company whose products have killed millions<sup>5</sup> and continue to do so.

It is hard to evaluate the Foundation’s promises, pledges, bylaws and best intentions separately from Philip Morris International’s well-documented history of manipulating research results to advance its marketing strategies. And, given the Foundation’s linkage to PMI, the research objectives of the Foundation will continue to be justifiably suspect until PMI takes immediate and meaningful steps to end its marketing of tobacco products and supports the adoption of proven tobacco control measures across the world. Moreover, for research supported by tobacco industry resources to be trusted, such resources need to be directed to an established and creditable entity whose research priorities and operations are completely independent of the industry.

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<sup>1</sup> Michaels D. Doubt is their product *Sci Am.* 2005;292:96-101.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/mpower\\_report\\_full\\_2008.pdf](http://www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/mpower_report_full_2008.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20170912006953/en/Philip-Morris-International-Announces-Support-Establishment-Foundation>. Accessibility verified November 8, 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Philip Morris International Inc. Annual Report. 2016;128.

<sup>5</sup> Proctor, RN. The history of the discovery of the cigarette lung cancer link: evidentiary traditions, corporate denial, global toll. *Tobacco Control* 2012;21:87e91.