

FOIA MARKER

**This is not a textual record. This is used as an
administrative marker by the William J. Clinton
Presidential Library Staff.**

Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records
Subgroup/Office of Origin: Records Management - SUBJECT FILE
Series/Staff Member: Subject Files
Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 14114
Scan ID: 129652
Document Number:

Folder Title:
WE001

Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
S	88	5	7	1

**SERVICE
EMPLOYEES**

INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO, CLC

1313 L STREET N.W. • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005 • (202) 898-3200



JOHN J. SWEENEY
INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

RICHARD W. CORDTZ
INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER

August 18, 1995

President Clinton
White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of more than 1 million American workers and their families, I salute your sensible steps against childhood tobacco use.

As the nation's largest health-care union and as a political voice for hundreds of thousands of working parents, the Service Employees International Union has a long-standing interest in public health and the well-being of children. SEIU has spoken out on behalf of expanded child immunization, better day-care, and tougher child-labor measures. We have fought attempts to cut spending on health care for low-income children and mothers. Your plans to curtail underage tobacco smoking and chewing represent an important preventative public health strategy. This corresponds well with SEIU's own work, and you have our enthusiastic support.

As parents, we struggle to teach and protect our children, but recognize that society has an important role in shaping our young. We cannot guard against vending machine purchases. We do not want to forbid our children from attending sporting events or watching them on television. We cannot shield them against multi-pronged media offensives that relentlessly hammer on the hipness, attractiveness, and fun of smoking. It seems that as adults have become more and more aware of smoking's dangers, the tobacco marketers have trained their sights on our children, and with considerable success: smoking among 8th graders has climbed 30 percent in the past three years. Every day sees another 3,000 young people become regular smokers.

These new policies also make good sense in the context of health care reform. Prevention is the cheapest form of health care, and we know that people who do not begin smoking as teens or children rarely become regular smokers. The new policy is a good start on reducing the \$50 billion annual health care costs associated with smoking.

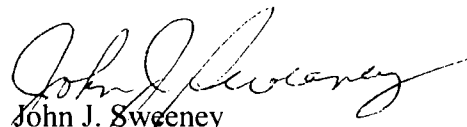
President Clinton

Page 2

August 18, 1995

Nonetheless, SEIU must register one note of concern. If your measures are effective, tobacco firms must either cultivate overseas markets or reduce domestic production. This threatens the livelihood of thousands of tobacco factory workers and farmers. We urge you to implement a program of retraining and adjustment assistance for the displaced. It may seem a difficult commitment to make in this era of fiscal frugality, but layoffs and benefit cuts are even more daunting for hard-working people with families to provide for.

Very truly yours,


John J. Sweeney
International President

JJS:pc:ch
opeiu#2
afl-cio, clc