

Supporting Reality Check Smoke – Free Movies Campaign

The Mental Health / Public Health / Residential Services Committee (Chairmen Busick and Roberti and Legislators Alfonso, McAfee, Provenzano, R.S. Parete and Stoeckeler) offers the following:

WHEREAS, tobacco use is responsible for nearly 5,000,000 million deaths every year worldwide, and

WHEREAS, more than 5,000 youth under the age of 18 try a cigarette for the first time each day in the United States, and

WHEREAS, more than 3.5 million youth between the ages of 12 and 17 are current smokers in the United States and one-third of them will eventually die from a tobacco related disease, and

WHEREAS, the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement was intended to prohibit tobacco companies from marketing their products to youth, including the use of movies as a means of marketing, and

WHEREAS, tobacco shots in the top-ten grossing movies released from May 2002 to May 2003 were in youth-accessible and youth-marketed G, PG and PG-13 films, and

WHEREAS, exposure to smoking in movie recruits more than half (52%) of new adolescent smokers, and

WHEREAS, youth from across the state have collected petitions and postcards calling major movie studios to adopt the recommendations of the Smoke-Free Movie Project, and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization, American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Legacy Foundation, American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, Society for Adolescent Medicine and others, including the Los Angeles Department of Health Services, United States Public Interest Research Group and Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility have endorsed the smoke-free movies solution, and

WHEREAS, Reality Check, a statewide youth-led and adult-supported movement out to expose the truth about tobacco and the manipulative marketing practices of the tobacco industry, is involved raising awareness about the impact of tobacco use in films and to call on the motion picture industry to adopt four simple voluntary actions:

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1. No Tobacco in Youth Rated Films

No new film which is rated G, PG or PG-13 should depict or imply any tobacco products, brand names of tobacco or tobacco use.

2. Certify No Pay-Offs

The producers should post a certificate in the credits at the end of the film declaring that no one involved with production of the movie received anything of value (cash, free cigarettes or other gifts, free publicity, interest free loans or any other item of value) from anyone in exchange for using or displaying tobacco in the movie.

3. Require Strong Anti-tobacco Ads

Studios and theaters should require a genuinely strong anti-tobacco ad (not one produced by a tobacco company) to run before any film with any tobacco presence regardless of its MPAA rating.

4. Stop Identifying Tobacco Brands

There should be no tobacco brand identification or the presence of tobacco brand imagery (such as billboards) in the background of any movie scene.

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature endorses the four goals of the Reality Check smoke-free movies campaign, and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to President George W. Bush, United States Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton and Charles Schumer, United States Congressman Maurice Hinchey, the National Association of Counties, New York State Attorney General Elliot Spitzer, New York State Health Department Commissioner Antonia Novello, the Motion Picture Association of America, major motion picture studios and their parent corporations including Warner Bros., owned by Time Warner, Disney and Miramax, owned by the Walt Disney Corporation, Columbia Pictures, owned by Sony Corporation of America, the National Association of Theater Owners, and Reality Check,

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and moves its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE

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REFERRED BACK TO COMMITTEE