

**CONFIDENTIAL:**  
**MINNESOTA TOBACCO LITIGATION**

**MEMORANDUM**

September 22, 1992

**TO:** Management Committee  
Coordinating Committee

**FROM:** Bob McAdam

**SUBJECT:** Massachusetts Tax Initiative Update

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**Overview**

With the Massachusetts primary now behind us, there is much more focus on the fall campaign. The campaign is beginning to take shape in many ways and the ongoing survey research and focus group testing is allowing us to refine our electronic media and direct mail messages for use in the coming weeks.

**Opposition Activities**

The most recent campaign finance filing of our opposition indicates that they have raised only about \$170,000 since the last reporting deadline. They have overwhelming support from the media, so there is little they need to do in generating favorable press stories.

**Survey Research**

We are now receiving results from our third benchmark survey and have completed our first test of advertising concepts through focus groups. While the overall support level for the initiative has not decreased substantially, the arguments we can use to move people to oppose the initiative have become much better defined.

We will begin daily tracking surveys in early October, when the electronic media begins. We have also planned two more focus group tests of ad concepts that will appear during the latter part of October.

**Themes**

While the exact themes that will be used for this campaign are still being refined, it appears that there are certain themes which continue to move voters in our direction and for which we have credible evidence and factual support.

**Anti-Tax:** There is still a substantial base of support for the overall anti-tax message in Massachusetts. There have been several local battles over increasing property taxes that have sustained a grass roots opposition against taxes. Furthermore, Governor Weld has held to his no tax pledge and has remained popular.

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Anti-Bureaucracy: We continue to look for particular abuses of the Department of Health that can be used to demonstrate how they may misuse the money if it is appropriated to them by the legislature.

Diversion: Appropriations from the highway fund and the local aid fund have a history of being directed to projects unrelated to the purpose for which they were intended. Research indicates that there is a high level of understanding of and cynicism about this issue. Because the legislature will decide how the money is spent, we can effectively use this issue.

Priorities: In an attempt to move a small percentage of "guilty liberal" voters to oppose the tax, we have tested the idea that there are other priorities which need attention. While the tests so far have not been overwhelmingly encouraging, we believe there is still a possible way to use this issue to our benefit.

Tolerance: This issue is somewhat similar to "fairness," however we do not focus on fairness to smokers. Rather, we discuss the fact that Massachusetts has a reputation for being tolerant of the choices and lifestyles of others. The focus group test of this theme went remarkably well.

It is important to remember that each of these themes will be targeted at different audiences. It is our hope to convey these themes to the audiences through targeted media and direct mail approaches.

### Media

We intend to purchase roughly 3,800 Gross Rating Points in the Boston, Springfield, and Providence media markets. That level of television limits us to probably no more than six different commercials. We have been working closely with station managers to ensure that the opposition does not receive a disproportionate amount of free time. At present, no free time has been granted to them, and we believe some stations will not grant them free time at all.

### Voter Contact

We have nearly completed the first round of calls from our issue identification telephone bank. Of the 450,000 calls completed to registered voter households, we have identified 25% as opposing the initiative and another 45% as "persuadable" based on specific push questions. Each of the persuadable respondents will receive a tailored direct mail piece from the campaign.

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Grass Roots

We retained and trained 10 grass roots coordinators who are working in each of the ten congressional districts to register identified unregistered smokers, distribute collateral materials to individuals and businesses that have agreed to assist and to turnout identified smoker supporters on election day.

Coalitions

We have been assured that Barbara Anderson, the head of the largest anti-tax organization in the state, will oppose the tax. We are continuing to work on a statewide mailing to her list of supporters.

Organized labor is likely to re-affirm its position against the initiative during its state convention in October. We also expect information on our issue to be included in the mailing to labor households that is traditionally done before election day.

We are working on a number of other constituencies beyond the "tobacco family" that we believe will be supportive of our position.

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