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RJRT

June 10, 1988

TO: Kent Wold
FROM: Mike Curry
SUBJECT: Minnesota Action Plan

This recommends a commitment of RJRT people resources in Minnesota for creating a personal involvement to neutralize the nation's most anti-tobacco legislative environment.

Problem

The Minnesota anti-tobacco environment, comprised of elected government, media, and the Smoke-Free 2000 Coalition, has increased its influence over the past 10 years. Over the past two years, the legislature enacted a 15¢/pack tax increase, sampling ban, and narrowly defeated fire-safe cigarette, vending, and advertising restriction proposals. Next year, we are likely to face these issues plus a 1¢ packaging tax and possible tobacco liability legislation. Notably, Minnesota is a bellweather-catalyst for other states seeking innovative ways to restrict tobacco. Therefore, Minnesota's environment affects our situation in other states.

Objectives

Realistically, in the short term, we should mobilize resources to merely achieve an accommodation of pro and anti-tobacco interests, slowing down the anti-tobacco movement. Long term, a committed involvement program may achieve a reversal of Minnesota's antagonism toward tobacco.

Program Elements

RJRT should develop a corporate team comprised of our lobbyists, Public Issues/PR group, Field Sales, and Marketing Research to fully comprehend, then overcome the unique Minnesota tobacco antagonism. We should combine the capabilities of our Marketing Research with the insights of RJRT's two highly respected, knowledgeable lobbyists. Our Field Sales and a Public Issues Coordinator must be trained to use the acquired information to develop persuasive, open-minded messages for

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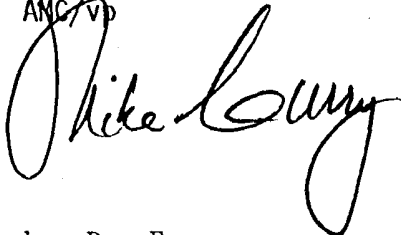
target recipients including tobacco allies (especially retail grocers), smokers, organized labor, the media, and legislators. Legislative targets should include reasonably neutral, yet powerful leaders such as Speaker Bob Vanasek, House Health and Human Services Committee Chairman Paul Ogren, Senate President Roger Moe, and Senate Tax Committee Chairman Doug Johnson.

Additional Opportunities

As progress is made in personal contacts, RJRT should become involved in contributing to Minnesota's economy, especially to reach the DFL (Democrat Farm Labor) Leadership. Three major issues include:

1. The high importance of organized labor (AFL-CIO and Teamsters)
2. The massive Iron Range unemployment
3. Farm economy in Southern and Western Minnesota

AMC/vp



bcc Don Foreman
Mike Flanagan