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June 12, 2009

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CARDIN HOLDS PRESS CONFERENCE TO PRAISE SENATE PASSAGE OF BILL TO REGULATE TOBACCO

Senator Calls Bill Major Step in Reducing Teen Smoking

BALTIMORE – Joining representatives from the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association and Campaign for Tobacco-free Kids, **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** today celebrated congressional passage of legislation that will empower the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to regulate tobacco products, including the power to remove harmful ingredients from tobacco products and to stop false claims made by the tobacco industry regarding the addictive nature of nicotine.

On Thursday, the Senate passed the bill by a vote of 79-17, and today the House of Representatives passed it by a vote of 307-97. President Obama has said he will sign the bill.

Senator Cardin, a co-sponsor of the bipartisan measure, said passage of the bill was one of the most important steps we can take to protect the health of all Americans. *“After almost a decade-long struggle, this bill was finally passed because of the tremendous toll that tobacco use has on the health of our citizens. Today, more than 400,000 Americans and 6,800 Marylanders die each year from tobacco use. For every Marylander who dies from smoking, approximately 20 more suffer serious tobacco-caused health problems.*

“This bill gives the FDA the power it needs to help addicted smokers overcome their addiction, and to make the product less toxic for smokers who are unable or unwilling to stop. This bill is long overdue and represents a responsible approach to dealing with the smoking addiction in this country.”

It is estimated that more than 40 million Americans are currently addicted to tobacco. The tobacco industry spends more than \$13 billion a year to promote its products. Much of that money is spent in ways designed to tempt children to start smoking, before they are mature enough to appreciate the enormity of the health risk.

In Maryland, more than one in seven high school students smoke cigarettes, and each year, 22,000 Maryland children try cigarettes for the first time. Of these, 6,600 become addicted to cigarettes each year.

The *Family, Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control* Act, H.R. 1256, would do the following:

- Establish A New Chapter on Tobacco Regulation;
- Give Authority to Restrict Tobacco Advertising;
- Give Authority to Prevent Sale to Youth;
- Preserve FDA Rule to Curb Tobacco Use by Youth;
- Require Stronger Warning Labels;
- Prevent Tobacco Industry Misrepresentations;
- Give Authority to Order Removal of Hazardous Ingredients;
- Set Standards for Reduced Risk Products; and
- Require Tobacco Companies to Pay the Cost of Regulation.

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