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Big Tobacco, Meet the FDA

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Tobacco legislation signed into law in June gives the Food and Drug Administration sweeping new authority to regulate the production, marketing, and sale of tobacco products, which are responsible for nearly one in five American deaths.

In his speech at the signing of the new bill, President Barack Obama called the legislation “a victory for health care reform” that will reduce the nearly \$100 billion in annual health care costs tied to tobacco.

Under the Family Smoking Pre-vention and Tobacco Control Act, the FDA will implement strict tobacco regulations in the coming months and years, including a ban on misleading terms on tobacco labels, such as “low tar” and “light,” restrictions on youth-focused marketing, and elimination of candy- and fruit-flavored cigarettes. By January, tobacco manufacturers will be required to disclose all ingredients and additives to the FDA.

According to cancer prevention expert Tim Byers, MD, of the University of Colorado Cancer Center, FDA restrictions on tobacco advertising and marketing are a long overdue step in the right direction for better tobacco control at a national level.

User fees collected from tobacco manufacturers will fund all FDA tobacco regulation activities, including creation of the FDA Center for Tobacco Products and a Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee.

Find details on the FDA’s website at www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/PublicHealthFocus/ucm168412.htm