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Children Holding Events Across State Today To Help
Raise Awareness of Harmful Effects of Tobacco Products

Washington, DC - Congressman Steve Rothman (D-Fair Lawn) hailed New Jersey students who are holding events across the state today as part of a national "Kick Butts Day" to help fight tobacco use. More than 1,500 events have been planned for today as children call on the tobacco industry to stop marketing their products to young Americans. The children are also calling for increased government efforts to raise awareness of the detrimental effects that tobacco use has on everyone.

"I am delighted that so many young people in New Jersey are committed to stopping tobacco use and to getting tobacco companies to stop advertising their addictive and harmful products to some of the most easily-influenced consumers - children," Rothman said. "For far too long the tobacco industry has gotten away with a marketing scheme that has made smoking seem "cool" to children when it is anything but that. Having children be the ones who are leading this "Kick Butts Day" initiative signals that this generation of young Americans will not tolerate being misled and victimized by the tobacco industry."

According to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, which is coordinating today's events across the nation, tobacco companies spend \$336.6 million a year in New Jersey to market their products. Much of this tobacco marketing occurs in venues such as convenience stores and in magazines that are effective at influencing kids to smoke. The organization also notes that 24.5 percent of in New Jersey high school students smoke, and 19,700 kids become daily smokers every year. Tobacco use kills 10,700 New Jersey residents annually and costs the state \$2.48 billion in health care bills, the group said.

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