



# Should 202,000 letters have gone to Congress instead?

Recently, tens of thousands of junior and senior high school kids mailed over 200,000 letters to Hollywood's elite asking them to take a responsible stand on smoking in the movies. How many responses did the kids get? **Zero.** Why?

Peer-reviewed research studies demonstrate that the more smoking that kids see in movies, the more certain it is they'll start smoking. The effect is a straight dose-response.

Regardless of whether or not their friends smoke, how well they're doing in school, parental permissiveness or any other factor, kids who see the most smoking on screen are *three times* as likely to start smoking as kids who've seen less.

These results put Hollywood on notice. Now that it knows the effect its movies are having on young people, the film industry must stop promoting tobacco immediately. Or else, as happened to the tobacco industry, moral culpability will become legal liability.

That's why teens in New York State wrote Hollywood figures they trust can make a difference. They expected stars like Julia Roberts and Brad Pitt, the Directors Guild of America, and the MPAA to acknowledge their concerns — the same as those expressed by the AMA, the World Health Organization and other public health authorities.

Instead...total silence.

Out of 202,000 letters mailed to Hollywood, the kids report just two responses: Julia Roberts' fan mail handlers threatened "legal action" and the Directors Guild refused delivery.

From the rest? The same fearful silence that has prevailed since the days when tobacco interests openly vetted screenplays and paid cold hard cash to place their brands on screen.

For the past year, Smoke Free Movies has suggested common sense, *voluntary* ways for Hollywood to stop serving Big Tobacco, protect young people, and guard its own interests.

After all, cigarettes don't sell movie tickets. But movies do sell smoking. And smoking kills half of those who start as teens. The backlash has just begun for five million deaths a year worldwide.

A voluntary solution is still possible. But only if the Hollywood community faces the facts and breaks its silence.

If it acts now, it can take the credit. Delay and it will take the blame.

OVER TWO-THIRDS OF YOUTH-RATED MOVIES (PG OR PG15) FEATURED SMOKING IN 2002. *There is more smoking in general admission movies now than at any time since 1960.\* Three media giants — Disney, AOL TimeWarner, and Sony — made more than half of all smoking films.*

Review the solutions at [SmokeFreeMovies.ucsf.edu](http://SmokeFreeMovies.ucsf.edu)

Smoke Free Movies aims to sharply reduce the film industry's usefulness to Big Tobacco's domestic and global marketing—a leading cause of disability and premature death. This initiative by Stanton Glantz, PhD (coauthor of *The Cigarette Papers* and *Tobacco War*) of the UCSF School of Medicine is supported by the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund. To learn how you can help, visit our website or write to us: Smoke Free Movies, UCSF School of Medicine, Box 1390, San Francisco, CA 94143-1390. \*2002 U.S. live-action features grossing over \$500,000.



**SMOKE  
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