

Dear Sir:

I just had to drop you a note to express my feelings about your recent participation in a senate hearing on smoking.

After witnessing the dog and pony show called a senate hearing, I am ashamed of and totally disgusted with these elected representatives we have. They appear to be a group of pompous, self righteous windbags that are not above exploiting children to make a political statement. The young boy they exhibited for their own political ends was a sad sight to see.

All of you gentlemen conducted yourselves with dignity and honesty and I felt truly sorry for the position you were put in. Basically you were between a rock and a hard place.

I do want to inform you that I am 55 years old and a smoker for decades. I'm not proud of it, but I am also not ashamed of it. I am not addicted, I resent others telling me what I am. I have quit for as long as 3 years at a time. The habit is hard to break but not impossible. I do not need hospitalization to quit, nor do I need medical attention. To quit I need will-power.....But, I do enjoy smoking.

I have yet to see any hard evidence that second hand smoke injures others. My grandson has allergy problems, but smoking around him does not cause it to flare-up. Being around a cat will cause breathing problems in less than 5 minutes. His reaction is severe to cat dander. I think the government should make a law outlawing cats in public. Cats should not be allowed out of the owners homes. I find them extremely offensive. We should incarcerate all cats found in public. If found in a public building, they should be executed immediately. Being politically correct is not one of my virtues.

The government of the self-righteous is taking liberty from us one slice at a time. I resent it. There has been no case that I know of of anyone contracting AIDS from my smoking. I am a nurse and have taken care of 100's of patients with many different diseases. I have witnessed deaths from many causes, one no easier than the other. Death is the result of life. Americans are living longer now than at any other time in history. What do these people want? Eternal life. If so, their in the wrong business.

I will continue to smoke, until I decide to quit. Its my business. The gullible are on the march. Let them eat Cake.

I'll take my cigarettes with menthol until I decide its enough.

I do note that when I started to smoke in the early 50's,

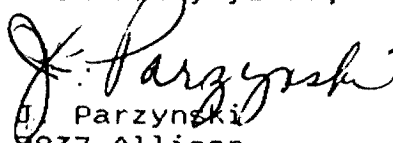
most business's did not sell to minors. In fact, if my mother sent me to the corner store to buy her a pack of cigarettes, I needed a note from her before they would sell them to me. Cigarettes were not dispensed by machine. But where there is a will, there is a way. I started smoking in my early teens. Like beer sales today, there was one store in the neighborhood that would sell to me. Joe camel was not part of the scene. If someone wants to smoke, they will. By the way, I have seen addicts in the hospital setting, if someone thinks cigarettes are addicting, they are merely showing their total ignorance on the subject. The ignorant should not be allowed to dictate government policy, but it looks like they are. Too bad, another liberty is going out the window. I have warned several of my children, adults, that its my smoking today, it will be one of their pleasures tomorrow. Beware. I'm sorry to say, one or two of them are in the category of the ignorant when it comes to smoking. Between you and me, the next person that tells me I'm living in denial when it comes to smoking is going to get kicked in the shins.

I'll close by saying I think all of you gentlemen conducted yourselves with decorum in a difficult situation. I commend you all. I apologize for the rambling of this letter, it still makes me angry when I think of the jerks sitting in Washington with their arrogance, self-righteousness, hypocrites all.

Lets confiscate the citizens hard earned money, but protect them from their pleasures. I have smoked Salem Lights for 20 years. I just may smoke them for 20 more.

Because you manufacture my brand, that is the reason I am sending you this letter. But I respect all of the CEO's that appeared in that hearing. What a sham.

Sincerely yours,



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