

NO. 0726
(SENSE-OF-THE-ASSEMBLY)
FAITH UNITED AGAINST TOBACCO USE

WHEREAS, every year, more than 400,000 Americans die preventable deaths caused by tobacco use or exposure to secondhand smoke; and

WHEREAS, every year, more than 400,000 additional children become addicted to tobacco, one third of whom will ultimately die prematurely from tobacco-caused illnesses; and

WHEREAS, public health research and data has found that, smoking during pregnancy and pregnant women's exposure to secondhand smoke is responsible each year for as many as 140,000 spontaneous abortions; 1,900 to 4,800 infant deaths caused by perinatal or pre-birth disorders; and 1,200 to 2,200 deaths from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). But, according to a study published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, every 10 percent increase in the price of cigarettes would reduce smoking among pregnant women by seven percent, saving, in just five year, 175,000 babies from smoking-affected births; and

WHEREAS, it an estimated 14% of the total cost of the Medicaid program in our country, or about \$31 billion per year, is spent to treat tobacco-caused illnesses; and

WHEREAS, the tobacco companies spend over \$15.4 billion per year to market and promote their deadly products and much of this marketing reaches children; and

WHEREAS, tobacco companies continue to market products such as candy flavored cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless tobacco, which attract more children into a lifetime of tobacco addiction and tobacco-caused harms and premature death; and

WHEREAS, public health experts have concluded that one of the best ways to reduce smoking, particularly among children, is to give the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the same regulatory authority over tobacco products that it now has over products such as macaroni and cheese and dog food; and

WHEREAS, public health experts and experience in many states and cities informs us that increasing tobacco taxes, fully funding tobacco prevention and cessation programs, and prohibiting smoking in public places are public policies that work effectively to reduce smoking and save lives;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Ft. Worth, Texas, July 21-25, 2007, joins with over twenty other faith denominations and organizations¹ to support Faith United Against Tobacco; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as part of Faith United Against Tobacco the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

¹ For a complete list, see tobaccofreekids.org.

- Strongly supports FDA jurisdiction over tobacco products and their marketing, and will call upon Members of Congress to support efforts to give FDA that authority; and
- Urges its regions and congregations to strongly support state and local public health measures to increase tobacco tax rates to fully fund tobacco prevention and cessation programs, and to prohibit smoking in public places.

General Youth Council of the Christian Church

The General Board recommends that the General Assembly
ADOPT Business Item No. 0726. (Debate time 12 minutes).