

ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON SMOKING AND HEALTH

c/o Action on Smoking and Health 6th floor, Suites 59-63, New House, 67-68 Hatton Garden, London EC1N 8JY

Rt Hon David Cameron MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
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Chair: Rt Hon Paul Burstow MP
Secretary: Bob Blackman MP
Treasurer: Ian Mearns MP
Vice-Chairs:
Rt Hon Kevin Barron MP
Baroness Finlay
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Lord Rennard
John Robertson MP

Dear Prime Minister

Introduction of Regulations on Standardised Packaging of Cigarettes and Tobacco Products and on Smoking in Cars

We are writing as officers of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Smoking and Health to ask you about the Government’s intended timetable for publication and debate of Regulations under the Children and Families Act 2014 on the standardised packaging of cigarettes and tobacco products, and on smoking in cars where children are present.

On 30 April 2014, you answered an oral question from Alex Cunningham MP in the following terms:

“Q4. [903736] Alex Cunningham (Stockton North) (Lab): When will the Prime Minister publish the regulations to introduce standard packaging for tobacco products and ban smoking in cars when children are present?”

The Prime Minister: I cannot pre-judge the Queen’s Speech, but we have said that we want to take action on this front and we will.”

It would presumably not be necessary to include the introduction of Regulations in the Queen’s Speech, since the primary legislation for both standardised packaging and smoking in cars has already been passed by Parliament. However, there are a number of necessary steps that must be gone through after publication of draft Regulations before they can be placed before Parliament. We are concerned that these steps are taken in a timely manner, so that after the final round of public consultation on the draft Regulations they can be placed before Parliament and voted on before the next General Election.

In particular for standardised packaging the Government is committed to a six week public consultation period after the draft Regulations are published. It will also be necessary for the Government to notify the European Union of the draft Regulations, under Directive 98/34/EC. This process can take up to six months.

Therefore, there is only a relatively short time left for the Government to publish the draft Regulations on standardised packaging, if they are to be voted on by Parliament before the General Election. We would ask you to confirm that the draft Regulations will be published in the next few weeks, so that public consultation can begin and other necessary steps can be taken.

We believe that these two measures taken together will represent a major step forward for public health in the UK. It is clear from the overwhelming backing that the primary legislation received in both Houses that this view is shared by a great majority of MPs and peers. We are sure that you would not wish the decisions of Parliament to be frustrated through poor timetabling or other unnecessary delays, and we would very much welcome any assurances you can offer in this regard.

Yours sincerely

Three handwritten signatures in black ink are arranged horizontally. From left to right: Paul Burstow, Bob Blackman, and Kevin Barron. The signatures are fluid and cursive.

Rt Hon Paul Burstow MP, Bob Blackman MP and Rt Hon Kevin Barron MP
Chair and Officers of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Smoking and Health