

May 30, 2012

Nancy Brown
Chief Executive Officer
American Heart Association
7272 Greenville Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75231

Dear Ms. Brown,

We at **TobaccofreeRx** are concerned that the American Heart Association is contributing to tobacco use by continuing its relationship with Walgreens. TobaccofreeRx is a national group of pharmacists, pharmacy school and medical school faculty, pharmacy students, nurses, physicians, attorneys, and health advocates that was organized in 2010 to end the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies.

Walgreens promotes itself as a partner in the fight against heart disease by sponsoring the AHA's Heart Walk and by donating money to your organization. It is listed among the "Heart and Stroke Champions" in your annual report. However, Walgreens profits by selling the leading avoidable cause of heart disease, stroke, and peripheral vascular disease in thousands of drugstores nationwide.

Thus, any contribution to cardiovascular health made by Walgreens' partnership with the AHA pales in comparison to the devastation caused by its daily sale of cigarettes. Tobacco sales represent a clear and profound conflict of interest acknowledged even by the pharmacy corporations. The American Heart Association should send a strong message back to Walgreens that it is completely unacceptable to claim to promote heart health while also selling tobacco products.

The AHA has a publicly available policy statement on tobacco sales in pharmacies, but it has not acted in accordance with that statement. Simply put, by accepting Walgreens' handout, and by turning a blind eye to the cigarette sales in thousands of Walgreens drugstores across the United States, the American Heart Association does more harm than good.

Ms. Brown, we call on you and the American Heart Association to take the long overdue action of ending ties with Walgreens and other pharmacy corporations that sell tobacco products.

Sincerely,

Vinayak Jha, MD

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This letter to Nancy Brown, CEO of the American Heart Association, has been individually co-signed by all members of the Board of Advisors of **TobaccofreeRx**, as follows. Statement of our professional affiliation does not necessarily constitute endorsement by our respective institutions.

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