

# *FRIENDS OF NIDA*

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«FormalName»  
«CapStreet2»  
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Dear «Salutation»,

We are writing representing the Friends of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to ask that you consider joining the Congressional Task Force on Tobacco and Health, an important bipartisan caucus of approximately 90 Members of Congress working for public policies to discourage tobacco use and promote good health.

Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, causing more than 440,000 deaths each year and resulting in an annual cost of more than \$75 billion in direct medical costs. Approximately 80% of adult smokers started smoking before the age of 18. Every day, nearly 4,000 young people under the age of 18 try their first cigarette.

Research funded by NIDA has identified the neural pathways involved in nicotine addiction, leading to successful new treatments as well as effective prevention strategies. Studies have shown that pharmacological treatment combined with behavioral treatment, including psychological support and skills training to overcome high-risk situations, results in some of the highest long-term abstinence rates.

Given the devastating effects of tobacco use, particularly for young Americans, we urge you to endorse the efforts of your colleagues by joining the Congressional Task Force on Tobacco and Health, co-chaired by Representatives Marty Meehan and Jim Hansen.

Please contact Shilpa Phadke (225-3411) on Congressman Meehan's staff for more information.

Friends of NIDA:

