

October 1, 2009

Honourable Dalton McGuinty  
Premier of Ontario  
Office of the Premier  
Legislative Building, Room 281  
Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A1A1

**Re: Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act, 2009**

Dear Premier,

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) applauds the Ontario government's announcement that it will sue tobacco companies to recover the costs of tobacco-related health care. Your government is to be congratulated on this landmark announcement that will require the tobacco industry to account for long-term practices that are inconsistent with acceptable corporate behaviour, the health and welfare of Ontarians, and a strong Ontario economy.

The *Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act* will allow Ontario to recover much of what it has lost to the tobacco epidemic to date. While the loss of health, life, and the company of loved ones has no remedy, the Act has the potential to reduce future suffering related to tobacco. But daunting challenges remain: the trend to quitting has reached a plateau, inexpensive contraband tobacco provides a dangerous temptation to price-sensitive young consumers, and many of those with mental health problems and with other substance use problems continue to smoke. Only through well-coordinated, continued attention to this epidemic will we comprehensively address Ontario's most deadly and expensive addiction.

CAMH has seen, first hand, the impact of tobacco on the lives of its clients who are some of the most vulnerable to the allure of tobacco marketing. Our clinical programs will continue helping smokers quit. Our policy, research, and education programs will continue to shine a light on the broader issues and advocate for effective solutions. We look forward to a continued partnership with the government in putting health first in Ontario.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Garfinkel, MD, FRCP(C)  
President & Chief Executive Officer