

Date: 25-Jan-2001
Source: National Smokers Alliance
Carried by: National Smokers Alliance
Title: National Smokers Alliance To Cease Operations
Location: Virginia

The Board of Directors of the National Smokers Alliance (NSA) has voted to dissolve the organization.

Thomas Humber, President of the NSA, issued the following statement:

"For almost eight years, the National Smokers Alliance has defended the rights of adult smokers with an intensity that has replicated dozens of simultaneous political campaigns.

"We began as a grassroots political organization, believing that the political process was the answer. However, the courts have supplanted the political process as the ultimate arbiter of most controversial public policy issues. While we don't like that, we are realists, and the reality is that the social war over smoking has changed drastically since we began. We have had more than our fair share of victories politically, and in the courts, where the rule of law supercedes the rhetoric.

"I have no doubt that the decision to discontinue operations will be misconstrued. The NSA is neither out of money nor are we defeated. Yet the long-term financial reality is quite simple: The continuation of our activities would require too large a professional structure and a massive diversion of energy and resources to fundraising, making effective commitment to our primary mission secondary. That would serve no one, least of all the adult smokers of America who have endured more than a decade of the anti-smoking movement systematically taxing, regulating and banning tobacco products wherever they can.

"The NSA has many members and friends who became politically active and organized through our programs. We appreciate their support, and we know that their activism will continue long after this organization is gone. As with most controversial issues, this is not one that will end. We regret that the NSA, as an organization, must end, but that does nothing to diminish the commitment to individual freedom that has driven the NSA.

"The effort to disenfranchise and marginalize smokers is, in reality, only one facet of a much broader assault on individual freedoms that has begun to infuse this society. Consequently, upon dissolution, the NSA will contribute some remaining assets to the Center for Individual Freedom, a 501(c)(4) corporation that supports the constitutional freedoms that all individuals must enjoy."

The National Smokers Alliance was a non-profit grassroots political organization of adults from across the country dedicated to fighting discrimination against smokers and to supporting business owners who wished to make their own decisions about their businesses without unnecessary government interference. Founded in 1993, the NSA became the primary voice for adult smokers and was comprised of over 3 million members. Financial support over the years came in the form of contributions from Philip Morris, Brown & Williamson and Lorillard, from hundreds of small businesses and corporations and dues and contributions from our members.

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