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**Testimony in Support of Raised Senate Bill 437:
An Act Concerning the Tobacco Products Tax**

March 11, 2010

My name is Dr. Pat Checko. I am Chairman of the statewide MATCH Coalition (Mobilizing Against Tobacco for Connecticut's Health). MATCH supports SB 437 that would impose a tax on "noncigarette smoking tobacco" and establish parity with other "tobacco products".

Roll-your-own tobacco is smoked just like any other cigarette and is just as deadly. The lack of warnings on pipe tobacco is particularly troubling because pipe smoke contains the same toxic mix of substances found in cigarette and cigar smoke: roughly 4,000 compounds, over 40 of which are known to cause cancer in humans and animals. Burning tobacco -- in pipes or cigarettes -- also produces a huge number of combustion products. Like cigarettes, pipe tobacco contains nicotine, a powerful nerve stimulant that's the primary cause of addiction to tobacco

A 2004 National Cancer Institute study followed 138,307 men -- more than 15,000 of whom smoked pipes -- over a period of 18 years. The study found that pipe smoking was associated with increased mortality caused by lung, oropharynx, esophageal, larynx, pancreatic, and colorectal cancers, as well as cardiovascular disease, when compared to the nonsmokers in the study. The researchers reported, "Pipe smoking confers a risk of tobacco-associated disease similar to cigar smoking."

Taxing bulk tobacco purchases should have the same health effect on users as increasing cigarette taxes has had on persons who smoke cigarettes. It is another strategy to reduce the prevalence of smoking and the health effects and costs associated with them.

MOBILIZE AGAINST TOBACCO FOR CONNECTICUT'S HEALTH