

alPHa's members are  
the public health units  
in Ontario.

**alPHa Sections:**

Boards of Health  
Section

Council of Ontario  
Medical Officers of  
Health (COMOH)

**Affiliate  
Organizations:**

Association of Ontario  
Public Health Business  
Administrators

Association of  
Public Health  
Epidemiologists  
in Ontario

Association of  
Supervisors of Public  
Health Inspectors of  
Ontario

Health Promotion  
Ontario

Ontario Association of  
Public Health Dentistry

Ontario Association of  
Public Health Nursing  
Leaders

Ontario Dietitians in  
Public Health

July 24, 2018

Hon. Christine Elliott  
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care  
10th Flr, 80 Grosvenor St,  
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

Dear Minister Elliott,

**Re: Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy**

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On behalf of members of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) and its Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health, Boards of Health and Affiliate organizations, I am writing to ask for your commitment to the Smoke-Free Ontario (SFO) Strategy, which was released on May 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

Ontario is a world leader in implementing policies that have significantly reduced tobacco use and its associated burdens of mortality and disease. The release of a long-term strategy with specific actionable commitments and outcome targets is a first for the province, and we cannot understate the importance of a clear commitment from your Government to build on past success and make further strides towards the elimination of Ontario's leading cause of preventable disease and premature death.

alPHa has passed several tobacco-related resolutions over the years, including a call on the Province in 2011 to develop a comprehensive tobacco control strategy for Ontario and another in 2017 calling for a commitment to a Tobacco Endgame in Canada (both attached). We were delighted that the former call was answered this past May, and that the innovative, comprehensive and evidence-based recommendations of the Executive Steering Committee for the Modernization of Smoke-Free Ontario that were supported in the latter are reflected in the SFO Strategy.

We would also like to remind you that the Strategy includes specific references to targeting priority populations and acknowledges the related challenges posed by legal cannabis and vaping. It also makes statements of willingness to explore innovative measures and opportunities to support the Strategy's goals in the future.

Our members are eager to continue to play their key roles in achieving a Smoke-Free Ontario and look forward to congratulating your Government for an unequivocal commitment to the provincial policies and strategic initiatives that are required to make this a reality.

Yours sincerely,



Robert Kyle,  
alPHa President

**COPY:** Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Roselle Martino, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health and Long-Term Care, Population  
and Public Health Division

**ENCL.**

**TITLE: Call for Immediate Release of a Comprehensive Tobacco Control Strategy for Ontario**

**SPONSOR: Peterborough County-City Health Unit**

WHEREAS smoking and other forms of tobacco use still remain the single largest cause of preventable disease and contributes to the premature death of Ontarians annually; and

WHEREAS alPHa has, following a 2009 resolution, urged government to commit to the goal of preserving and enhancing reductions in tobacco use, and to this end to reinstate funding to 2008-2009 levels and in addition, enhance funding for comprehensive tobacco control efforts in Ontario; and

WHEREAS the Smoke-Free Ontario Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) submitted its report "Evidence to Guide Action: Comprehensive Tobacco Control in Ontario" to the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (OAHPP) in the Fall of 2010. The report presents a case for continued comprehensive tobacco control in Ontario; and

WHEREAS the SAC report was closely followed by a report from the Tobacco Strategy Advisory Group (TSAG) with the objective to advise the Ministry of Health Promotion & Sport in the development of a five-year plan to renew the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy. The TSAG report concluded that "The government must invest in a sustained and sufficiently intensive comprehensive tobacco control strategy in Ontario at levels required to eliminate the burden of tobacco use rapidly, equitably and cost-effectively"; and

WHEREAS Ontario has an opportunity to build on and expand its achievements obtained since the introduction of the Ontario Tobacco Strategy;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that alPHa urgently request the Premier of Ontario (Dalton McGuinty), the Minister of Health Promotion & Sport (Margarett Best), the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Deb Matthews), the Office of the Attorney General (Chris Bentley), the Minister of Finance (Dwight Duncan), the Minister of Revenue (Sophia Aggelonitis) and the Chief Medical Officer of Health (Arlene King), to demonstrate the entire set of recommendations within the Tobacco Strategy Advisory Group report and announce a renewed, long-term commitment to a comprehensive tobacco control strategy to reduce use and exposure to tobacco products and the illnesses and deaths they cause to Ontario's populations.

**TITLE:**           **Committing to a Tobacco Endgame in Canada**

**SPONSOR:**       **Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit**

WHEREAS       tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Canada; and

WHEREAS       the direct and indirect financial costs of tobacco smoking are substantial and were estimated as \$18.7 billion in 2013; and

WHEREAS       18.1% of adolescents and adults, or 5.4 million Canadians, were still smokers in 2014; and

WHEREAS       under the status quo, and even with the implementation of all MPOWER measures under the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, Ontario research has estimated that smoking-related deaths will continue to increase beyond 2030, while smoking rates will decline by less than half in the same period; and

WHEREAS       a tobacco endgame shifts the focus from tobacco “control” to envision a future that is free from commercial tobacco, and is a strategic process to implement measures that gradually decrease smoking prevalence, demand and supply to extremely low levels; and

WHEREAS       there is growing support in Canada and globally for a tobacco endgame, with the adoption of Endgame targets by Ireland, Scotland, Finland, and New Zealand; and

WHEREAS       a Steering Committee for Canada’s Tobacco Endgame was convened in 2015 and identified an endgame goal of less than 5% tobacco prevalence by 2035; and

WHEREAS       a summit on A Tobacco Endgame for Canada in 2016 brought together experts from broad sectors and published a Background Paper with evidence-based and innovative recommendations for tobacco endgame measures in Canada; and

WHEREAS       the Federal Tobacco Control Strategy is scheduled for renewal after March 31, 2017;

WHEREAS       the federal government’s consultation paper Seizing the Opportunity: the Future of Tobacco Control in Canada proposed a number of endgame strategies including being committed to a target of less than 5% tobacco use by 2035;

WHEREAS       the provincial Smoke Free Ontario Strategy is also presently under review; and

WHEREAS       it is the position of alPHa that Governments of Canada, Ontario and Canadian municipalities must act immediately to minimize the use of tobacco products and their related health impacts;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Association of Local Public Health Agencies write to the federal Minister of Health supporting the federal government's proposal to commit to a target of less than 5% tobacco use by 2035;

**AND FURTHER** that the Association of Local Public Health Agencies recommend that the federal government's approaches include those identified at the 2016 summit, A Tobacco Endgame for Canada;

**AND FURTHER** that the Association of Local Public Health Agencies write to the Ontario Minister of Health to recommend that the Smoke Free Ontario Strategy be aligned with the proposed tobacco endgame in Canada;

**AND FURTHER** that copies be sent to the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, and the Chief Medical Officer of Health of Ontario.

**ACTION FROM CONFERENCE:**

**Resolution CARRIED**