



BACKGROUND: Bill 206 going up in smoke?

PCs' ties with Tobacco lobby in Alberta puts tobacco reduction at risk

Since Hal Danchilla of the Canadian Strategy Group registered as a lobbyist for Rothmans, Benson & Hedges Inc. immediately after Bill 206 was introduced, Albertans are raising concerns the new health minister may not commit to passing the law to include restrictions on menthol products.

Bill 206 passed in November of 2013, and has been waiting almost a full year to be proclaimed in order for flavoured tobacco reduction measures to come into effect.

The Canadian Strategy Group, Hal Danchilla and the PCs:

- Canadian Strategy Group's Principal, Hal Danchilla, is a registered lobbyist in Alberta for Rothmans, Benson & Hedges Inc.:
<http://www.lobbyistsact.ab.ca/LRS/RegistrationPublic.nsf/vwByRegNum/CL0040-20121203161209?OpenDocument>
- Danchilla worked on Mandel's first successful Mayoral campaign (2004).
- Danchilla currently serves on the Progressive Conservative Party, Finance Committee
<http://www.canadianstrategygroup.com/about-us/hal-danchilla/>
- Danchilla has a dubious record as a lobbyist in Alberta:
 - In November 2012, CBC revealed Danchilla intended to exploit his personal relationships with key PC decision makers as a lobbyist for the Alberta College of Art and Design (ACAD): <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/alberta-art-college-spent-thousands-to-access-tory-government-1.1255533>
- Danchilla's former staffer at Canadian Strategy Group, Patricia Mitsuka, was Stephen Mandel's former Chief of Staff, who recently co-chaired Jim Prentice's PC leadership campaign.

Timeline: tobacco reduction in Alberta at risk

2012

- **December 6:** Bill 206, *The Tobacco Reduction (Flavoured Tobacco Products) Amendment Act* is introduced to the Legislative Assembly, which includes broad language prohibiting the sales of tobacco with flavouring agents.
- **December 19:** Hal Danchilla of Canadian Strategy Group files to register as a lobbyist for Rothmans, Benson & Hedges.

2013

- **November 23:** Bill 206 passes third reading in the Legislative Assembly.

2014

- **September 15:** Former Edmonton Mayor Stephen Mandel appointed as Health minister by Jim Prentice.

- **October 20:** When questioned by John Cotter of the Canadian Press about menthol restrictions under Bill 206, Mandel said: **“I don’t want to answer yes or no to things that are still up in the air...Menthol is still up in the air.”**

Bill 206—The Tobacco Reduction (Flavoured Tobacco Products) Amendment Act

- The Bill passed in November 2013 with almost unanimous support in the Legislative Assembly
- The Bill, if fully implemented, will provide first-class protection from flavoured tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes.
- The Bill is currently awaiting proclamation.

Menthol tobacco use in Alberta:

- Why Menthol Matters for tobacco reduction:

- According to the Campaign for a Smoke-Free Alberta (CFSA):

Menthol (mint) is one of the most dangerous flavour additives in tobacco products because of its medicinal properties and its ability to attract and retain new smokers. Menthol numbs the throat, opens the airways, and increases nicotine absorption into the bloodstream...Youths who smoke menthol cigarettes smoke 60 percent more cigarettes than their non-menthol smoking peers. The study also revealed youth menthol smokers are three times less likely to quit smoking than non-menthol smokers.

- According to CFSA:
 - Menthol is the most popular flavor among young Albertans.
 - 1 in 3 youth smokers are using menthol cigarettes, compared with 1 in 25 adult smokers.
- According to Health Canada’s 2012-2013 Youth Smoking Survey, 32% of youth smokers are using menthol cigarettes.