



IPCPR FACT SHEET

International Premium Cigar & Pipe Retailers
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H.R. 662

“Traditional Cigar Manufacturing and Small Business Jobs Preservation Act of 2015”

In 2009, “The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act” was signed into law with the intent of curbing youth access to tobacco products and preventing health effects of addiction to tobacco products. Premium cigars fit neither area, yet are facing undue regulation from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Center for Tobacco Products (CTP).

On April 24, 2014, the FDA issued proposed regulations to regulate premium cigars. Restrictions that our industry could face through this regulation include: requiring FDA approval on seasonal and historical blends/lines, several of which are produced in limited supply; a ban on sampling and merchandise, tools used by manufacturers to promote new products at in-store visits; and mandating the installation of graphic labels, ruining ornate artisan boxes that many consider collectable art pieces.

H.R. 662 protects the premium cigar retailer and its consumers, which account for tens of thousands of jobs in the United States. We urge you to co-sponsor this legislation and help to preserve a freedom enjoyed by adults for centuries. Premium cigars are not accessible or desirable to America’s youth. Cigars are a celebratory product appreciated by informed adults, with the typical cigar enthusiast having one or two per week.

Although there are over 13.9 BILLION cigars sold annually, this bill was carefully written to only protect true, premium cigars of which there are about 275-300 MILLION sold annually. The legislation defines a premium cigar as wrapped in whole 100% leaf tobacco, at least 6 pounds per 1,000 count, with no filters or tips. Additional language in H.R. 662 incorporates hand-made elements that define traditional premium cigars that are made in historic factories by skilled workers.

During the 113th Congress, the identical bill was introduced by Reps. Posey and Castor. During that time, it garnered 168 co-sponsors. With your help, we’ll raise greater awareness during the 114th.

IPCPR Position

IPCPR supports H.R. 662 and urges Members of Congress to co-sponsor and vote in favor of this legislation. This bill will help preserve an artisanal industry and tens of thousands of jobs in the United States. Premium cigars should not be regulated by the FDA.

For more information, please contact **Kip Talley**, IPCPR Senior Director of Federal Legislative Affairs, by emailing kip@ipcpr.org or calling **540-424-0479** (mobile).