



## One Adventist in Congress Supports Tobacco Control; All Three Take Tobacco Money

by Alita Byrd

All three Seventh-day Adventist members of the U.S. House of Representatives accept money from tobacco companies. One, Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), actively supports tobacco-control legislation. Although 114 out of 432 House representatives do not receive any money from tobacco companies, the Adventist representatives have received donations from such companies as RJR Nabisco, Brown & Williamson, and Philip Morris. All of the Seventh-day Adventist House members do say they support attempts to stop young people from smoking.

Sheila Jackson Lee is co-sponsor of a tough tobacco control bill (H. R. 3868). The bipartisan NO Tobacco for Kids Act that she supports had at least 100 co-sponsors as of July 1998. The proposed bill is comprehensive, containing such provisions as: A price increase of \$1.50 per pack of cigarettes over three years with funds raised going to tobacco control efforts and reduction of the national debt; validation of FDA authority to regulate tobacco products as a drug or device; smoking prevention and education initiatives; youth reduction goals for tobacco companies to reduce tobacco use by children by 33 percent in three years, 50 percent in five years, and 80 percent in 10 years; the establishment of a Tobacco Accountability Board to report on the tobacco industry; and other measures.

### Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX)

The Seventh-day Adventist representative who already supports this tobacco-control bill, Sheila Jackson Lee, represents the 18th district of Texas. Jackson Lee has been a Democratic member of the House only since 1994. She is a member of the Bellfort Seventh-day Adventist Church in Houston and she has given speeches at numerous Adventist institutions around the country. Endorsed by Barbara Jordan in a Democratic primary election, Jackson Lee was elected in the general election to occupy Jordan's seat in the House. Upon arriving in the House of Representatives, Jackson Lee was elected president of the Democratic freshmen class. She has served on numerous committees, including the House Judiciary Committee and the Committee on Science. Jackson Lee is also the founder of the Congressional Children's Caucus.

In 1994, Jackson Lee accepted a \$500 contribution from RJR Nabisco. Out of 30 Texas representatives, nine took no money whatsoever from tobacco companies. Of those who did accept tobacco money, Jackson Lee took the least.

A spokesperson for Jackson Lee said she does not solicit money from tobacco companies. She is serious about reducing teenage smoking

*Three Adventists serve in the U.S. Congress. One strongly supports tobacco control legislation; all three have taken tobacco contributions.*

and is "for some form of tobacco legislation, though it is a huge and complex [issue] and may take a long time." Jackson Lee is the only Seventh-day Adventist to be a co-sponsor of H.R. 3868, the bill to reduce teen smoking already introduced in this session of Congress.

## Roscoe G. Bartlett (R-MD)

Roscoe G. Bartlett, Jr., a third-term Republican House delegate from Maryland's sixth district elected in 1992, is an active, tithing member of the Frederick Seventh-day Adventist Church. He is the congregation's religious liberty director. Bartlett graduated from Columbia Union College in Takoma Park, Maryland, where he later taught science. His 10 children attended Adventist schools. In the Congress, Bartlett serves on the National Security Committee, Small Business Committee, and Science Committee.

From 1994 to 1996, Bartlett received \$1,500 from RJR Nabisco. Out of eight Maryland representatives, he accepted the next-to-least amount.

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Bartlett wants to make it difficult for teenagers to try a product that is "absolutely unhealthy." According to a spokesperson, he is "definitely for measures which limit access to tobacco for minors and limit exposure of information to teens that would entice them to use a dangerous product." Bartlett supports advertising restrictions, carefully enforced age limits for buying tobacco, including ID checks and the elimination of cigarettes in vending machines.

Bartlett, a believer in limited federal government, is philosophically opposed to the government's right to tax. However, Bartlett is open to considering a tax increase on tobacco, as long as there is a corresponding tax decrease for those likely to pay the increased price of cigarettes. He has also historically opposed subsidies for tobacco farmers.

## Bob Stump (R-AZ)

The longest-serving Adventist in the House of Representatives is Bob Stump, an 11-term Republican representative from the third congressional district of Arizona. First elected in 1976, Stump is a member of the Glendale Seventh-day Adventist Church, outside Phoenix. His children attended Advent-

ist schools, and all three graduated from Loma Linda University, two becoming board-certified anesthesiologists, and one a nurse anesthetist. Stump serves as chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and as vice chairman of the National Security Committee.

According to Common Cause, a congressional watch organization, Stump received more tobacco money than the average congressperson. From 1988 to 1995, Stump received \$14,000 from tobacco companies, including Philip Morris Companies Inc., RJR Nabisco Inc., Brown & Williamson Tobacco, Loews Corporation, and the Tobacco Institute. The average tobacco PAC contributions received by current members of the House from 1987 to 1997 was \$11,900.

Stump defends his decision to take tobacco money, calling tobacco "a legitimate business in the South and different areas. . . . I support tobacco farmers." He will "not support the horrendous tax increase on cigarettes for any reason . . . because it is just a means of additional revenue—it is money-grabbing." Stump also does not fully agree with restrictions on tobacco advertising: "I believe when it is looked into more we will find it is unconstitutional." Stump says he will support any attempt to stop young people from smoking.