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[Becky Kavoussi](#)

Tobacco front group produced bogus report

A letter to the Editor of The News Tribune, November 4, 2001 by [Becky Kavoussi](#), Health Care Policy Associate

Editor's note: The Economic Opportunity Institute helped author Initiative 773.

You did a great job of deceiving your readers on Halloween. Richard Davis' column on Initiative 773 and smuggling is totally suspect. Your paper and Davis irresponsibly failed to mention at least two critical background points that readers should know.

First, as president of the Washington Research Council, Davis should have mentioned that an R.J. Reynold's Tobacco Company lobbyist, T.K. Bentler, is on the council's board of trustees.



Second, the FIA report on which Davis' entire argument is based is bogus. FIA International Research has been producing smuggling reports for the cigarette companies for years, and the National Coalition Against Crime and Tobacco Contraband is a notorious cigarette company front group on the issue. The real statistics come from the American Heart, American Cancer and American Lung associations - organizations concerned about the health and families of children. Every single state that has significantly increased its cigarette taxes has significantly increased its revenues - despite the lost sales caused by the related smoking declines and despite any associated increases in cigarette smuggling or other tax-avoidance sales.

It is negligent to allow those with sinister motives to parade as disinterested analysts on the pages of your newspaper. In the future, do your readers a favor and give them the appropriate information to make informed decisions.



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