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**AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS PRAISES HOUSE PASSAGE OF
TOUGH NEW TOBACCO CONTROL LEGISLATION**

Statement by American Academy of Pediatrics President Renée R. Jenkins, MD, FAAP,
on House Passage of H.R. 1108

WASHINGTON, D.C.—“The American Academy of Pediatrics, representing 60,000 pediatricians, applauds the U.S. House of Representatives for its overwhelming 326-102 passage of historic tobacco control legislation. By approving the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act by a veto-proof majority, the House has sent a powerful message that children’s health is a top priority.

“The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act truly has the power to save the lives of this and future generations of children by keeping cigarettes and chewing tobacco out of their hands. It would give the Food and Drug Administration the power to restrict tobacco marketing and sales to children, ban candy-flavored cigarettes and publicize the harmful health effects of tobacco products.

“I urge the Senate to swiftly pass the legislation and send it to the president. And I urge President Bush to drop his objections and sign it.

“Every day we delay enacting this legislation, 4,000 children and adolescents will try their first cigarette. Every day we delay, 1,000 children and adolescents in America will become daily smokers. Every day we delay, far too many children will take their first steps toward a lifetime of addiction and health problems that will cause many of them to die prematurely from completely preventable diseases.

“Compared to the world’s richest democracies, the United States ranks a shameful 20th in child health and well-being, according to a recent UNICEF report. Taking care of our children and adolescents, including protecting them from the harmful health effects of cigarettes and chewing tobacco, should be our top priority.

“It’s time to enact the strongest possible tobacco regulations. Children should not have to wait any longer. Their lives depend on it.”

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The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults. The AAP Julius B. Richmond Center, a national center of excellence funded by the Flight Attendant Medical Research Institute and the American Legacy Foundation, is dedicated to the elimination of children’s exposure to tobacco. For more information about the Richmond Center, go to: <http://www.aap.org/richmondcenter/>