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## **STATE FIRE COMMISSIONER PRAISES PASSAGE OF FIRE-SAFE CIGARETTES LEGISLATION**

**HARRISBURG** – The Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner today praised the passage of legislation that will require all cigarettes sold in Pennsylvania to be “fire safe.”

Once signed into law, House Bill 1612 will adopt a fire safety standard for cigarettes and require that all cigarettes sold in Pennsylvania be low-ignition strength, making them less likely to cause fires if left unattended.

“Fire-safe cigarettes are rolled with bands of less porous, slow-burning paper, so if the cigarette is left unattended, it will go out when it burns down to one of those bands,” said State Fire Commissioner Edward A. Mann. “There have been too many tragedies caused by the careless use of cigarettes, and this standard is designed to reduce that risk.”

According to the National Fire Protection Association, smoking materials, such as cigarettes, cigars or pipes, are the leading cause of fire deaths in the United States. In 2005, roughly one-in-four fire deaths were attributed to smoking materials. That same year, more than 82,000 smoking-material fires caused approximately 800 deaths and 1,660 injuries. The statistics do not include injuries or deaths among firefighters involved in responding to the scene.

“Smokers still need to be careful when smoking in their homes,” Mann said. “Household items like curtains, mattresses, and bedding can still catch on fire very quickly, and the only way

to prevent them from igniting is to be extremely vigilant. But the change that this legislation requires is a good step toward preventing hundreds of senseless deaths every year.”

The Coalition for Fire-Safe Cigarettes reports that 14 states and the District of Columbia have implemented fire-safe cigarette laws, and 22 states have passed such legislation.

For more information regarding fire-safe cigarettes, visit [www.firesafecigarettes.org](http://www.firesafecigarettes.org).

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