

Policing Tobacco

The Senate has passed legislation to empower the Food and Drug Administration to regulate tobacco products. The bill is nearly identical to a version adopted in April by the House of Representatives. President Obama has said he will sign it into law.

WHAT THE F.D.A. COULD DO UNDER THE BILL

- Set up a Center for Tobacco Products financed by industry fees, hire a director and staff, and form a scientific advisory committee.
- Adopt standards to regulate hazardous chemicals in existing tobacco products.
- Approve or ban proposed new tobacco products.
- Prohibit use of terms like "light," "mild" and "low tar."
- Eliminate flavorings like clove. Consider eliminating menthol.
- Require larger, graphic warning labels on cigarette packs.
- Further restrict advertising and promotion of tobacco products.
- Require tobacco companies to disclose previously secret details about ingredients.

WHAT THE F.D.A. COULD NOT DO

- Ban all tobacco products.
- Order the complete removal of nicotine from tobacco products.
- Raise the national minimum age to purchase tobacco products above 18 years.

MAIN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SENATE AND HOUSE BILLS

- On cigarettes, Senate bill requires graphic warnings covering at least **50 percent** of front and back of cigarette package. House bill requires warnings covering at least **30 percent**.