

# The Wall Street Journal on the McConnell/DeWine Tobacco Buyout/FDA Bill

On Tuesday, July 20, 2004, *The Wall Street Journal* published an editorial titled “Congress’s Marlboro Men.” Following are excerpts from the editorial:

*“To understand what’s wrong with the tobacco deal approved by the Senate last week, consider that its biggest fan is America’s biggest cigarette-maker, Philip Morris....*

*“Our guess is that Philip Morris is so giddy because it sees what its smaller competitors also see: the makings of a new public utility that will lock into place competitive advantages for the cigarette industry’s biggest company and give government a rooting interest in its long-term survival. Meet the new Marlboro Man: Uncle Sam....*

*“The political class’s subsequent addiction to tobacco money is undeniable....*

*“And Senator McConnell is Philip Morris’s new best friend because the tobacco giant knows that FDA regulators would severely restrict marketing, which gives it an advantage over lesser-known rivals and lower-priced competitors. Put another way, the federal government would become not only a partner of tobacco but a partner of tobacco monopolists....*

*“In the end, Washington wants to have it both ways: Deplore the tobacco industry as a malevolent force even as it soaks up its proceeds to fund the government. It’d be far more honest to ban it outright.”*

The Senate amendment to H.R. 4520 will impose \$15 billion in new taxes targeted to middle- and lower-income taxpayers. It exclusively benefits one company, which already controls about 50 percent of the U.S. cigarette market – to the detriment of hundreds of domestic manufacturers.

The quota buyout passed by the House of Representatives provides the financial relief tobacco growers need, without trampling on the free enterprise system or taxing the middle class.

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company • Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp. • Lorillard Tobacco Company  
• Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company • Lane Limited