

STATE SENATOR • TUPAC A. HUNTER • 5TH DISTRICT

# Hunter Press Release

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## **Sen. Hunter's Slow-Burn Cigarette Bill Signed Into Law** *New law protects consumers, raises funds for fire safety programs*

LANSING- State Senator Tupac A. Hunter's (D-Detroit) bill to only allow the sale of slow-burn cigarettes in Michigan was signed into law recently by Governor Jennifer Granholm. Public Act 56 of 2009 (Senate Bill 264) fines retailers \$100 per pack if they sell cigarettes that do not meet fire safety slow-burn standards, and creates a new fund for fire safety programs.

"I am very pleased that Michigan is joining the ranks of states that have implemented slow-burn cigarette laws," said Senator Hunter. "If people must smoke, then at least these slow-burn cigarettes will offer them and their families more protection from fires caused by cigarettes left burning in ash trays, or fires caused when a smoker falls asleep while smoking."

Public Act 56 creates a fine of not more than \$100 per pack if a manufacturer, wholesaler, dealer or agent sells or offers to sell anything other than slow-burn cigarettes. Any fines collected will be deposited into The Cigarette Fire Safety Standard and Firefighter Protection Act Fund that will be housed in the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth. This money may only be used to support fire safety and prevention programs.

According to the Coalition for Fire Safe Cigarettes (<http://www.firesafecigarettes.org>), 49 states plus the District of Columbia have now passed fire-safe cigarette laws. Wyoming has fire-safe cigarette legislation pending.

The U.S. Fire Administration (<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/campaigns/smoking/>), within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, says that at least 1,000 smokers and nonsmokers die every year in home fires caused by cigarettes and other smoking materials. Of that number, one in four who died in home fires were not the smoker whose cigarette caused the fire, and one third of those who died were children. The U.S. Fire Administration encourages smokers to use slow-burn cigarettes.

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