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LETTER  
**Smoking and a Shorter Life**

Published: May 5, 2008

To the Editor:

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[Counting Birthdays: The Short End of the Longer Life \(April 27, 2008\)](#)

Re "The Short End of the Longer Life"  
(Week in Review, April 27):

It was no surprise that a recent report by Harvard researchers identified smoking as a major contributor to why women in parts

of the United States can expect to live shorter lives than their mothers. Cigarette companies have been taking aim at women and girls for decades.

As Majid Ezzati, one of the report's authors, suggests, this life expectancy disparity must be addressed through public health strategies.

The American Lung Association strongly believes that the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, now pending in Congress, is a public health priority. This legislation would give the Food and Drug Administration the authority and resources to curb tobacco marketing to children, to set standards for tobacco products and to require claims made about tobacco products to be truthful.

With 1,100 children becoming regular smokers each day, Congress should pass this legislation now. The lives of millions of women are depending on it.

Bernadette Toomey  
President and Chief Executive, American Lung Association  
Washington, April 29, 2008

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