



## TOBACCO

### Social Criteria Investment Screen

#### AUTHORITY

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has laid out its concern for health in a social statement “Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor” [2003], acknowledging that health is central to our wellbeing, and caring for it is a matter of shared stewardship. Historically, predecessor church body statements have spoken specifically to the role of nicotine and tobacco products as some of the most widely used and misused potentially dangerous drugs (“Chemical Comforters and Drug Dependency,” The American Lutheran Church, 1972).

#### WORDING OF SCREEN

The ELCA recommends no investment in firms involved in the production or marketing of tobacco and tobacco-related products.

#### DEFINITION OF PROBLEM

Definition of Problem: Tobacco is a product that even when used in moderation is addictive and harmful. As early as 1964 the U.S. Surgeon General reported on its dangers. The American Cancer Society has stated that non-smokers exposed to second-hand smoke absorb nicotine and other components just as smokers do. In addition certain marketing practices, such as those aimed toward children, are particularly objectionable.

The exponentially increasing popularity of e-cigarettes, particularly among young people, presents new public health challenges. Although e-cigarettes (both with and without nicotine)<sup>1</sup> are presented by manufacturers as benign relative to combustibles, and an aid in smoking cessation, for youth they represent a gateway to combustibles<sup>2</sup> and a delivery system for cannabinoids and other illicit drugs.<sup>3</sup>

1 <https://tobacco.ucsf.edu/even-non-nicotine-e-cigarettes-are-gateway-cigarettes-and-promote-youth-relapse>

2 <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/surgeon-generals-advisory-on-e-cigarette-use-among-youth-2018.pdf>

3 [https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/2016\\_SGR\\_Full\\_Report\\_508.pdf](https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/2016_SGR_Full_Report_508.pdf) Page 58: Because of their design, e-cigarettes may facilitate drug use among youth and young adults, as these products can be used as a delivery

**Corporate Social Responsibility in the ELCA uses the tools of screening of investments, shareholder advocacy and community investing to work with corporations, calling them to ensure that people are treated fairly and with dignity and to create sustainable communities.**

**More at [ELCA.org/CSR](http://ELCA.org/CSR).**

Recognizing that various investors will implement this along a continuum, for the purpose of this screen tobacco production and marketing might include: tobacco, cigars, chewing tobacco or smokeless tobacco as well as companies supplying key component elements to the tobacco industry (cigarette papers, flavorings, adhesives, electronic cigarettes) or the sale and marketing of tobacco related products.

## **SOCIAL POLICY AND STUDIES**

*Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor* (ELCA social statement, 2003)

## **HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS**

“Health, Life, and Death: A Christian Perspective” (The American Lutheran Church, 1977)

“Chemical Comforters and Drug Dependency” (The American Lutheran Church, 1972)

**APPROVED** by the ELCA Church Council – April 21-23, 1990

**UPDATED** by the Advisory Committee for Corporate Social Responsibility – September 8, 2006

**APPROVED** by the ELCA Church Council – November 2007

**APPROVED** by the ELCA Church Council – November 12, 2012

**UPDATED** by the Corporate Social Responsibility Review Team – September 5, 2019

**APPROVED** by the ELCA Church Council – November 2019

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system for cannabinoids and other illicit drugs (Giroud et al. 2015; Morean et al. 2015; Schauer et al. 2016).