

**TIME**

**States Ask Big Retailers to Halt Tobacco Sales**

Charlotte Alter, March 17, 2014

In the wake of CVS' recent announcement that it would halt the sale of tobacco products in its stores that also have pharmacies, 28 state attorneys general have asked five big retailers—Walmart, Rite Aid, Walgreens, Kroger and Safeway—to follow suit

More than two dozen state attorneys general have asked retail giants to follow CVS's lead and halt the sale of tobacco products in stores that also have pharmacies.

Attorney generals sent letters Sunday to Walmart, Rite Aid, Walgreens, Kroger and Safeway, urging them to stop selling tobacco products in stores that also sold health products. "There is a contradiction in having these dangerous and devastating tobacco products on the shelves of a retail chain that services health care needs," the letter said. The attorney generals from 28 states wrote that they hope to usher in a "time when cigarettes simply cannot be purchased from a business that sells products prescribed by doctors."

The letter comes just a month after CVS Caremark stopped selling tobacco products, calling selling cigarettes "inconsistent with our purpose."

The charge is led by Attorney Generals Eric T. Schneiderman of New York and Mark DeWine of Ohio, but includes 28 states and territories including Mississippi, New Hampshire, and Utah. The letter does not threaten any legal action for continuing to sell tobacco products, but a source told the New York Times that there could eventually be a push for legal reforms.

CVS's decision to stop selling tobacco is estimated to cost over \$1.5 billion in sales, a relatively small amount for a company that had \$123 billion in sales in 2012. But none of its competitors have shown interest in following CVS's lead since the company announced the ban last month, despite the support of public health officials.

<http://time.com/27076/states-asks-big-retail-to-halt-tobacco-sales/>