From: Nonoy Oplas <minimalgovernment@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, 8 March 2018 9:33 PM
To: MOH Tobacco Control (MOH) <Tobacco_Control@moh.gov.sg>
Subject: Position paper on the proposed tobacco Standardize Packaging in Singapore

08 March 2018

Singapore Ministry of Health
16 College Road
College of Medicine Building
Singapore 169854

Attention: Director, Epidemiology and Disease Control Division

Dear Sir/Madam,

Related to the Standardized Packaging (SP) proposal for tobacco products in Singapore, may I respectfully submit my observations and some data about the subject (attached).

I am an economist from Manila, I head an independent and free market think tank called Minimal Government Thinkers (MGT). I am a non-smoker, never smoke a single stick of cigarette in my 50+ life, never worked with any tobacco company, never get any funding from the tobacco industry. In 2011, I published my first book, Health Choices and Responsibilities.

My purpose in writing this is to discuss SP's policy issues and implications on the following:

(1) Seeming disconnection between cigarette smoking and health outcome like life expectancy,
(2) Seeming alarmism in Singapore when other rich countries have much higher smoking incidence,
(3) Disrespect of intellectual property rights (IPR) like trademark and branding,
(4) Trade of illicit and smuggled products,
(5) Possible spillover effect in other products deemed "unhealthy" like alcohol, sugar beverage, confectionery, and
(6) Possible spillover effect in health and trade policies of the Philippines and other ASEAN countries.

Singapore should not entertain the idea of having SP policy and legislation. Singapore should remain as the bastion of private property rights protection in the region, a model that many developing and emerging economies in Asia and the rest of the world would like to emulate.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Bienvenido S. Oplas, Jr.
President, Minimal Government Thinkers

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