**2016 Veterans Day LTE Template**

**Drafted October 26, 2016**

Final, customized LTEs should be no more than 250 words (All text in CAPS should be customized)

(Note – Think about pitching this to your local media as a feature story if you have a strong spokesperson on the issue. Contact [Spencer Straub](http://tobwis.org/connect#spencer-straub) for assistance in that case)

Dear Editor,

OPEN YOUR LETTER BY STATING THAT FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11 IS VETERAN’S DAY. TALK ABOUT WHY THIS DAY IS IMPORTANT TO YOU, THEN SHARE THAT 17% OF (OR ABOUT 70,000) WISCONSIN VETERANS CURRENTLY SMOKE.

PROVIDE SOME HISTORICAL CONTEXT BY TALKING ABOUT THE UNFORTUNATE HISTORY OUR MILITARY HAS WITH TOBACCO. EXAMPLES INCLUDE CIGARETTES BEING INCLUDED IN FIELD RATIONS UP UNTIL 1975, THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY SPONSORING MILITARY EVENTS (IT’S ESTIMATED [THE INDUSTRY SPONSORED AS MANY AS 1,400 EVENTS BETWEEN 1980-1997)](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2794239/), OR THE FACT THAT MILITARY PERSONNEL STILL HAVE EASY ACCESS TO LOW-COST, TAX-FREE CIGARETTES (SEE HEADLINE “EASY ACCESS TO LOW-PRICED CIGARETTES PROMOTES SMOKING IN THE U.S. MILITARY” AT <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0369.pdf>).

HERE ARE TWO OPTIONS TO TALK ABOUT HOW TOBACCO HURTS THE MILITARY AND VETERANS:

**OPTION 1: MACRO VIEW --** DISCUSS HOW TOBACCO USE AFFECTS MILITARY READINESS AND VA COSTS (SEE “HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF TOBACCO USE AMONG OUR TROUPS” AND “TOBACCO COSTS TO THE U.S. MILITARY” AT <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0369.pdf>). YOU CAN ALSO TRANSITION TO TALK ABOUT POSITIVE STEPS THE MILITARY IS TAKING, LIKE RESTRICTING TOBACCO AND E-CIGARETTE USE (<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/tobacco-free-living/INCOMING-CARTER-Tobacco-Policy-Memo.pdf>, <http://projectuniform.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/POLICY063.pdf>). GOOD INFORMATION IS ALSO AVAILABLE HERE -- <http://ndri.org/docs/Tobacco%20Use%20and%20the%20Army%20Values.rtf>.

**OPTION 2: PERSONAL STORY --** IF YOU’RE A VETERAN THAT SUCCESSFULLY QUIT, TALK ABOUT YOUR QUITTING JOURNEY (CONVERSELY, IF YOU’RE A VETERAN STILL USING TOBACCO, TALK ABOUT THE STRUGGLE TO QUIT). IF YOU HAVE A FRIEND/LOVED ONE THAT USED TOBACCO AND SERVED, TALK ABOUT HOW HARD IT WAS TO WATCH THEM BE ADDICTED/SUFFER TOBACCO HEALTH CONSEQUENCES.

GIVEN ALL OUR VETERANS HAVE DONE FOR US, THE LEAST WE CAN DO FOR THEM IS GET THEM THE HELP THEY NEED TO LEAD HEALTHIER, LONGER LIVES. SHARE THAT TAILORED RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP THEM AT <https://www.ucanquit2.org/>. YOU CAN ALSO ADD THAT THEY AND ALL TOBACCO USERS, CAN CALL THE WISCONSIN TOBACCO QUIT LINE AT 1-800-QUIT NOW FOR FREE HELP.

 Sincerely,

 NAME