

**ONTARIO  
SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE**

**B E T W E E N :**

**HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN IN RIGHT OF ONTARIO**

Plaintiff

– and –

**ROTHMANS INC., ROTHMANS, BENSON & HEDGES INC.,  
CARRERAS ROTHMANS LIMITED, ALTRIA GROUP, INC., PHILIP  
MORRIS U.S.A. INC., PHILIP MORRIS INTERNATIONAL, INC., JTI-  
MACDONALD CORP., R.J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO COMPANY, R.J.  
REYNOLDS TOBACCO INTERNATIONAL INC., IMPERIAL TOBACCO  
CANADA LIMITED, BRITISH AMERICAN TOBACCO P.L.C., B.A.T  
INDUSTRIES P.L.C., BRITISH AMERICAN TOBACCO  
(INVESTMENTS) LIMITED, and CANADIAN TOBACCO  
MANUFACTURERS' COUNCIL**

Defendants

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**STATEMENT OF DEFENCE OF THE DEFENDANT  
ALTRIA GROUP, INC.**

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1. The defendant Altria Group, Inc. (hereafter “Altria”) denies, or where applicable does not admit, the allegations made in the Amended Fresh as Amended Statement of Claim amended on April 26, 2016 (the “Statement of Claim”) by the plaintiff (“Ontario” or the “Province”), unless expressly admitted, and puts the Province to the strict proof thereof. Altria admits the allegations contained in paragraphs 10-12 and 26-27 of the Statement of Claim.

2. Altria denies the allegations contained in paragraphs 1-6, 20, 29, 40-45, 48-72.1, 73, 74-127, and 141-150 of the Statement of Claim.

3. Altria has no knowledge in respect of the allegations contained in paragraphs 7-9, 13-19, 21-25, 28, 30-39, 46-47, 72.2-72.5, 73.1-73.4, 128-140, and 151 of the Statement of Claim.

## **I. RELIEF CLAIMED**

4. Altria denies that the Province is entitled to the relief claimed in paragraph 1 of the Statement of Claim and that the Statement of Claim should be dismissed with costs.

## **II. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. The Plaintiff and the Nature of the Case**

5. Altria denies the allegations in paragraphs 2-4 in the Statement of Claim and denies the Province's ability to seek relief or recover the cost of health care benefits described in paragraph 1 of the Statement of Claim (the "Claimed Cost") from Altria, except that Altria admits that this action is brought pursuant to the provisions of the *Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*, 2009, S.O. 2009 C.13 (the "Act").

6. Altria admits only that the Statement of Claim states the definitions referred to in paragraphs 5-6 of the Statement of Claim for the purposes of the Statement of Claim but not otherwise.

### **B. The Defendants**

7. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraphs 7-9 of the statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

8. Altria admits that Altria Group, Inc. (formerly known as Philip Morris Companies Inc.) is a Virginia corporation with offices at 6601 West Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia in the United States of America.

9. Altria admits that Philip Morris USA Inc. (hereafter, collectively with its predecessors, “PM USA”) was formerly known as Philip Morris Inc. and is a Virginia corporation with offices at 6601 West Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia in the United States of America. Altria further states that U.S.-sourced tobacco products manufactured by PM USA accounted for less than 0.1% of all duty-paid cigarettes sold in Canada from the early 1960s until 1989, after which time U.S.-sourced products were no longer offered for sale in the Canadian duty-paid market. Further, tobacco products manufactured in the U.S. by PM USA for the Canadian duty-free market were provided for sale only to individuals leaving Canada and had to be taken out of the country immediately after purchase. To the very limited extent that cigarettes manufactured by PM USA were ever offered for sale in Canada, Altria states that such cigarettes were at all material times a legal product sold in compliance with all applicable laws.

10. Altria admits that Philip Morris International Inc. (“PMI”) is a Virginia company with offices located at 120 Park Avenue in New York, New York in the United States of America.

11. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraphs 13-19 of the Statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

12. Altria denies the allegations in paragraph 20 of the Statement of Claim. Altria further states that it is a holding company which has never engaged in the manufacture of tobacco products as defined in the Act and has never engaged in the promotion of tobacco products in Canada. Furthermore, U.S.-sourced tobacco products manufactured by PM USA accounted for less than 0.1% of all duty-paid cigarettes sold in Canada from the early 1960s until 1989, after which time U.S.-sourced products were no longer offered for sale in the Canadian duty-paid market. Further, tobacco products manufactured in the U.S. by PM USA for the Canadian duty-

free market were provided for sale only to individuals leaving Canada and had to be taken out of the country immediately after purchase. To the very limited extent that cigarettes manufactured by PM USA were ever offered for sale in Canada, Altria states that such cigarettes were at all material times a legal product sold in compliance with all applicable laws. Altria further states that it has no knowledge as to the truth of the allegations made with respect to other defendants and therefore denies the same.

13. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraphs 21-22 of the Statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

### **III. THE MANUFACTURE AND PROMOTION OF CIGARETTES SOLD IN ONTARIO**

#### **A. Canadian Tobacco Companies**

##### **The Defendant Rothmans Inc.**

14. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraphs 23-24 of the Statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

##### **The Defendant Rothmans, Benson & Hedges Inc.**

15. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraph 25 of the Statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

16. Altria admits that Rothmans, Benson & Hedges Inc. ("RBH") was created through the amalgamation of Benson & Hedges (Canada) Inc. and Rothmans of Pall Mall Limited in 1986 and admits that Benson & Hedges (Canada) Ltd. (renamed Benson & Hedges (Canada) Inc. in 1979), at various times since 1950, manufactured and promoted cigarettes offered for sale in Ontario.

17. Altria admits that RBH has, at various times since 1986, manufactured and promoted cigarettes offered for sale in Ontario. Altria also admits that, between 1986 and 1989, RBH distributed in Canada a small amount of U.S.-sourced tobacco products manufactured by Philip Morris Incorporated (now PM USA), but these products accounted for less than 0.1% of all duty-paid cigarettes sold in Canada during this time period.

18. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraph 28 of the Statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

19. Altria denies the allegations in paragraph 29 of the Statement of Claim. Altria states that between 1986 and March 2008, corporate entities related to Altria Group, Inc. maintained a 40% shareholder interest in RBH. Since September 2008, RBH has been an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of PMI. Altria further states that it and PM USA have had no corporate affiliation with PMI since a March 28, 2008 spinoff.

**The Defendant JTI-Macdonald Corp.**

20. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraphs 30-33 of the Statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

**The Defendant Imperial Tobacco Canada Limited**

21. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraphs 30-39 of the Statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

**B. Multinational Tobacco Enterprises**

22. Altria denies the allegations in paragraphs 40-45 of the Statement of Claim. Altria states additionally that paragraphs 40-45 of the Statement of Claim purport to collectively categorize

separate entities as certain “Groups” or “Lead Companies”, and Altria denies that such characterization is accurate, proper or has any legal significance whatsoever relevant to the Province’s claims or the Province’s ability to seek relief or recover the Claimed Cost from Altria. Altria further states that, to the extent that companies have had policies in common with Altria in relation to smoking and health, such common policies were developed for appropriate business purposes and were lawful. In further answer, Altria states that:

- (a) While its corporate affiliates had a corporate relationship over the years with RBH, at all material times, operating decisions were made in Canada by RBH, and RBH arrived at its own positions on smoking-related issues;
- (b) It never entered into a conspiracy or common design with the Defendants PMI, PM USA, or RBH, or any other defendant in this action;
- (c) It never acted in concert with the Defendants PMI, PM USA, or RBH, or any other defendant in this action;
- (d) RBH was never the agent of Altria; and
- (e) Altria never directed the activities of RBH or any other defendant in this action.

23. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraphs 46-47 of the Statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

## **TOBACCO RELATED WRONGS COMMITTED BY THE DEFENDANTS**

### **A. General**

24. Altria states that Altria is a holding company which has never engaged in the manufacture of tobacco products as defined in the *Act* and has never engaged in the promotion of

tobacco products in Canada. Furthermore, U.S.-sourced tobacco products manufactured by PM USA, accounted for less than 0.1% of all duty-paid cigarettes sold in Canada from the early 1960s until 1989, after which time U.S.-sourced products were no longer offered for sale in the Canadian duty-paid market. Further, tobacco products manufactured in the U.S. by PM USA for the Canadian duty-free market were provided for sale only to individuals leaving Canada and had to be taken out of the country immediately after purchase. To the very limited extent that cigarettes manufactured by PM USA were ever offered for sale in Canada, Altria states that such cigarettes were at all material times a legal product sold in compliance with all applicable laws. Altria states that it has no knowledge as to the truth of the allegations made with respect to other Defendants and therefore denies the same. Altria denies the remaining allegations in paragraph 48 of the Statement of Claim. Specifically, Altria denies that:

- (a) it has committed any tobacco related wrong, or breached any common law, equitable or statutory duty as alleged in the Statement of Claim or at all;
- (b) it manufactures or has manufactured a defective product;
- (c) it fails or has failed to warn, unlawfully sells or markets to children and adolescents or has ever done so;
- (d) it makes or has made any deceitful or negligent misrepresentations;
- (e) it contravenes or has contravened any consumer protection or competition legislation; or
- (f) it takes or has taken part in any conspiracy, concerted action or common design as alleged.

Altria further states the following:

- (g) At all times, Altria conducted itself in accordance with appropriate business practices and in compliance with the applicable common law, equitable and statutory duties governing its conduct;
- (h) In addition, a significant and growing proportion of the Canadian cigarette market is supplied by manufacturers other than those identified in the Claim. Specifically, manufacturers located on aboriginal reserves (the “Aboriginal Manufacturers”) produce, promote and provide cigarettes to numerous consumers across Canada. Vendors selling cigarettes produced by the Aboriginal Manufacturers routinely fail to collect the federal and provincial taxes applicable to sales to non-aboriginal purchasers, creating a substantial incentive for non-aboriginal to purchase cigarettes from these manufacturers instead of the manufacturers identified in the Claim. Additionally, cigarettes produced by the Aboriginal Manufacturers dominate the market for contraband cigarettes in Canada. As a result, a significant fraction of the cigarettes consumed in Canada are not supplied by manufacturers identified in the Claim, but rather by the Aboriginal Manufacturers; and
- (i) In particular, Altria denies that any breach of duty by Altria caused persons in Ontario to start or continue to smoke cigarettes or be exposed to cigarette smoke from cigarettes manufactured or promoted by it; and
- (j) Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Altria specifically denies that it has breached any common law, equitable or statutory duty or obligation owed to persons in Ontario as alleged in the Statement of Claim. Altria specifically denies that any such alleged breach of duty or obligation caused any population of

insured persons to smoke cigarettes or to continue to smoke cigarettes. Altria specifically denies that it committed any tobacco related wrong or acted in a manner that wrongfully caused any person in Ontario to smoke and/or continue smoking.

**B. Breaches of Common Law, Equitable or Statutory Duties or Obligations**

**The Defendants' Knowledge**

25. Altria denies the allegations made in paragraphs 49-50 of the Statement of Claim. Altria does admit that:

- (a) cigarettes contain tobacco and nicotine occurs naturally in tobacco;
- (b) nicotine, as found in cigarette smoke, has pharmacological effects; and
- (c) nicotine in cigarette smoke is addictive and cigarette smoking is addictive.

Altria further states that it has never manufactured cigarettes in Canada at any material time. In admitting (a) to (c) above, Altria states that it can be difficult for smokers to quit smoking, but this should not deter smokers who want to quit from trying to do so. Altria denies the allegations in paragraph 50 of the Statement of Claim to the extent that the term "addictive" is intended to assert that cigarette smokers are unable to quit smoking if they decide to do so.

26. Altria admits that cigarette smoking causes or contributes to cancers of the lung, bronchus, trachea, larynx, pharynx, lip, esophagus, bladder, kidneys, and pancreas; leukemia; emphysema; chronic bronchitis; chronic airways obstruction; chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; coronary heart disease; peripheral vascular disease; and vascular disease. Altria states that "cancer of the stomach," "cancer of the nose," and "cancer of the oral cavity" are relatively vague terms which might encompass a number of different and varied anatomical structures, but

admits that smoking causes cancer in certain of the anatomical structures associated with the stomach, nose, and mouth. Altria denies that smoking causes or contributes to cancers of the liver, colon, rectum, or uterus, or to pulmonary circulatory disease or miscarriage. Altria states that “fetal harm” is a relatively vague term which might encompass a number of different and varied anatomical structures, but admits that smoking is associated with an increased risk of placental abruption, premature birth, stillbirth, neonatal mortality, and intrauterine growth restriction; and that cigarette smoking causes lower infant birth weight in infants whose mothers were smokers during pregnancy. Altria further states that many other factors, whether environmental, physiological, genetic, or based upon lifestyle choices, can also have harmful effects on pregnancy. Altria acknowledges that the Surgeon General’s 2014 Report (entitled “The Health Consequences of Smoking – 50 Years of Progress”) concluded that there is sufficient evidence to infer a causal relationship between smoking and asthma and increased morbidity and general deterioration of health, but Altria’s position is that at this time, these conclusions are based on inadequate scientific support. Altria further states that diseases caused or contributed to by cigarette smoking are complex and may be caused or contributed to by many different factors, whether environmental, physiological, genetic or based upon lifestyle choices. With respect to environmental tobacco smoke (“ETS”) (referred to in the Statement of Claim as “second hand smoke”), Altria acknowledges that the Surgeon General’s 2006 Report (entitled “The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke”) concluded that there is sufficient evidence to infer a causal relationship between ETS and lung cancer, coronary heart disease, and cough in children, but Altria’s position is that at this time, these conclusions are based on inadequate scientific support. Altria denies the remaining allegations in paragraph 51 of the Statement of Claim.

27. Altria denies the allegations in paragraphs 52-53 of the Statement of Claim. Altria states that cigarette smoke contains numerous constituents, some of which are acknowledged by public health organizations, such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Health Canada, and the International Agency for Research on Cancer, to be hazardous to health. Altria further states that, at all material times, persons in Ontario have been aware of the potential health risks associated with smoking and of the fact that it may be difficult to stop smoking. Further, at all material times, the federal government, the Province and the public health community have been aware of the potential health risks of smoking and of the fact that it may be difficult to stop smoking. The actions of, and information provided by the federal government, the Province and the public health community have reinforced the awareness of persons in Ontario with respect to cigarette smoking and its potential risks. At all material times, Altria had no materially greater awareness of the potential health risks associated with smoking and of the fact that it may be difficult to stop smoking, than did persons in Ontario, the federal government, the Province and the public health community.

28. Altria denies the allegations in paragraph 54 of the Statement of Claim and repeats paragraph 25 hereof.

29. Altria denies the allegations in paragraph 55 of the Statement of Claim.

#### **Breach of Duty – Design and Manufacture**

30. In response to the allegations in paragraphs 56-62 of the Statement of Claim, Altria states that it does not manufacture, advertise, market, distribute, or sell cigarettes in Ontario. Altria denies the allegations made in paragraphs 56-62 of the Statement of Claim. Altria has never breached any duty with respect to the design or manufacture of cigarettes as alleged or at all, nor

has Altria made any misrepresentations with respect to tobacco products or their characteristics. Altria repeats paragraphs 31-33 and 46 hereof, and states that it complied with all applicable common law, equitable, and statutory duties that govern its conduct. Altria further states the following:

- (a) To date, there are no technologically possible and commercially feasible features that could potentially reduce the harm of cigarette smoking that could have been incorporated into the design or manufacture of traditional cigarettes that have not been so incorporated. Notwithstanding its efforts and numerous advancements in scientific knowledge on the subject of smoking and health, no entity has yet been able to produce a commercially viable traditional cigarette that is free of health risks.
- (b) At all material times, the federal government has directed and supported the manufacture and sale of cigarettes in Canada, and set the standard of care required for cigarette manufacturers. As part of its direction and supervision of the cigarette industry, the federal government (among other things):
  - (i) Researched and developed strains of tobacco which became effectively the only varieties available for use in Canadian cigarettes;
  - (ii) Advised manufacturers on the necessity and efficacy of printed package warnings, as well as their content; and
  - (iii) Advised and directed manufacturers on the need to develop and promote lower-yield cigarettes.

- (c) Beginning in the 1950s, the government and public health community called for and otherwise encouraged the development and marketing of lower tar cigarettes. During this time, consumer demand also increased for lower tar cigarettes;
- (d) Altria cooperated with the government and health community and complied with all common law, equitable and statutory duties that governed its conduct at all material times;
- (e) At all material times the Province informed the public within Ontario of the risks associated with the consumption of tobacco products; and
- (f) In further answer, Altria admits that it has been unlawful to sell cigarettes to persons under a certain age. Notwithstanding those laws, some persons under a certain age have smoked. Further, Altria has never targeted under-aged smokers or non-smokers.

### **Breach of Duty to Warn**

31. Altria denies the allegations in paragraphs 63-70 of the Statement of Claim. Altria pleads and relies on paragraphs 30, 32-33 and 46 hereof and states that it complied with all common law, equitable and statutory duties that governed its conduct at all material times. Further, Altria states that cigarettes manufactured by PM USA and sold in Canada were labelled consistently with all applicable federal and provincial legislation and regulations and with the voluntary advertising code, to the extent that its products were ever subject to such legislation or regulation or to the voluntary advertising code. Specifically, by 1972, the voluntary advertising code adopted by certain Canadian cigarette manufacturers required package warnings concerning the health risks of smoking. Prior to 1972, representatives of the federal government had advised

against package warnings concerning health risks, on the ground that such risks were already well-understood and written warnings would only confuse the public. Package labels subsequently disclosed tar and nicotine levels by 1976. Thereafter, health warnings on cigarette packaging became increasingly prominent, in accordance with increasing federal and provincial legislation and regulation. By 2000, federal regulations required rotating graphic health warnings to cover at least 50% of cigarette packaging.

### **Breach of the Duty – Misrepresentation**

32. Altria denies the allegations made in paragraphs 71-72.1, 73, and 74-77 of the Statement of Claim and repeats paragraph 48 hereof. Altria has never at any time made representations that were false and has never suppressed any such scientific and medical data. No representations were made by Altria at any time which were false or made with willful blindness or recklessness as to their truth or falsity. Further, Altria states that it never represented that any tobacco products were less hazardous than any others, and that any tobacco products manufactured by PM USA and sold in Canada were labelled consistently with all applicable federal and provincial legislation and regulations and with the voluntary advertising code, to the extent that its products were ever subject to such legislation or regulation or to the voluntary advertising code. Altria pleads and relies on paragraphs 30-31, 33 and 46 hereof. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraphs 72.2, 72.3, 72.4, 72.5, 73.1, 73.2, 73.3, and 73.4 and therefore denies the same.

### **Breach of the Duty - Manufacturing or Promoting Products for Children and Adolescents**

33. Altria denies the allegations made in paragraphs 78-85 of the Statement of Claim. Altria has never breached any duty to children or adolescents as alleged or at all, and denies that it

targeted children or adolescents in its advertising or other activities. Altria also pleads as follows:

- (a) At all material times the Province had and undertook a program of informing children and adolescents within Ontario of the risks associated with the consumption of tobacco products, and if such persons have not been informed of such risks, which is denied, the Province failed to perform that program adequately;
- (b) At all material times the Province alone had the obligation to enforce all relevant statutes and regulations pertaining to the sale of tobacco products to under-aged smokers, as defined from time to time by statutes or regulations, and failed to do so.

**Conspiracy, Concert of Action and Common Design**

34. Altria denies the allegations in paragraph 86 of the Statement of Claim. At no time did Altria enter into or engage in any conspiracy, concert of action or common design with other persons. Altria further states that:

- (a) It conducts business in a highly regulated industry which leads, in some instances, to uniformity and consistency in the industry's manufacturing, packaging and promotional activities;
- (b) It conducted itself at all times in accordance with appropriate business practices and in compliance with any applicable common law, equitable, and statutory duties that governed its conduct;

- (c) In response to the allegation that unlawful acts were committed by Altria in furtherance of an alleged conspiracy, Altria repeats paragraphs 1-33 hereof, and in particular, paragraphs 27-33 hereof; and
- (d) Altria states that it never conspired or acted in concert or with a common design with any of the Lead Companies or defendants. Further, to the extent that other Lead Companies or defendants may have had policies in common with Altria in relation to smoking and health, those policies were developed for appropriate business purposes and were lawful. Altria further states that the risks associated with smoking have been widely known in Ontario, as elsewhere, for over 50 years, that information about the risks of smoking was communicated to persons in Ontario through a variety of sources and that Altria had no materially greater awareness of the potential health risks associated with smoking and of the fact that it may be difficult to stop smoking, than did persons in Ontario, the federal government, the Province and the public health community.

**(i) Conspiracy within the International Tobacco Industry**

35. Altria denies the allegations in paragraphs 87-107 of the Statement of Claim and repeats paragraph 34 hereof.

**(ii) Conspiracy within the Canadian Tobacco Industry**

36. Altria denies the allegations in paragraphs 108-116 of the Statement of Claim and repeats paragraph 34 hereof.

**(iii) Conspiracy within Corporate Groups**

**The Rothmans Group**

37. Altria denies the allegations in paragraphs 117-120 of the Statement of Claim and repeats paragraph 34 and refers to paragraph 38 hereof.

**The Philip Morris Group**

38. Altria denies the allegations in paragraphs 121-127 of the Statement of Claim and repeats paragraph 34 hereof.

**The RJR Group**

39. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraphs 128-134 of the Statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

**The BAT Group**

40. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraphs 135-140 of the Statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

41. Altria denies the allegations in paragraph 141 of the Statement of Claim and repeats paragraph 34 hereof.

**Breach of Consumer Protection Act, 2002, the Competition Act and their Predecessor Statutes**

42. Altria denies the allegations at paragraphs 142-147 of the Statement of Claim and repeats paragraphs 24 and 30-34 hereof.

**V. CONCLUSION**

43. Altria denies the allegations at paragraphs 148-150 of the Statement of Claim and repeats paragraphs 24 and 30-34 hereof.

44. Altria has no knowledge of the allegations in paragraph 151 of the Statement of Claim and therefore denies the same.

## **ANSWERS TO THE STATEMENT OF CLAIM AS A WHOLE**

### **A. GENERAL DEFENCES**

#### **(i) No cause of action**

45. The Statement of Claim discloses no cause of action because:

- (a) There has been no pecuniary damage suffered by insured persons in respect of the “cost of health care benefits” as defined by the *Act*;
- (b) The statutory liability the Province is attempting to impose on the defendants in this action is an after the fact attempt to make actionable conduct that was not actionable when it occurred;
- (c) If the Claimed Cost was incurred as alleged or at all, which is denied, it was incurred by the federal government by means of transfer payments, conditional grants and shared cost programmes, and not by the Province;
- (d) If the Province has incurred the Claimed Cost as alleged or at all, which is denied, the Claimed Cost was incurred to provide services to insured persons that the Province was and is required to provide pursuant to Ontario’s *Health Insurance Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.6, as amended, and any predecessor statutes; and
- (e) If the Province has incurred the Claimed Cost as alleged or at all, which is denied, the Claimed Cost was caused by the conduct and acts or omissions of the federal government and of the Province.

**(ii) No breach of duty**

46. Altria repeats paragraph 12 hereof and states:

- (a) Altria never owed nor breached a duty to persons in Ontario;
- (b) Altria conducted itself at all times in accordance with appropriate business practices and in compliance with the common law, equitable and statutory duties that governed its conduct; and
- (c) At all material times, the manufacture, sale, advertising and promotion of tobacco products in Ontario and throughout Canada has been supervised, regulated and controlled by the Province and the federal government. The Province encouraged or participated in such supervision, regulation and control in Ontario either directly or indirectly through agreements, express or implied with the federal government. Together the said governments have defined and delineated the duties of tobacco manufacturers in Canada including Ontario and have given advice, recommendations, directions and suggestions in relation to, *inter alia*:
  - (i) The nature and scope of research into the properties of cigarettes to be undertaken by Canadian tobacco manufacturers;
  - (ii) Whether warnings of the health risks and addictive character of cigarettes should be provided to consumers;
  - (iii) The content and placement of any such warnings to be provided;
  - (iv) Product modifications, including the development, manufacture, promotion, distribution and sale of cigarettes containing lower amounts of tar and nicotine as measured by standard smoking machines;

- (v) Communications by Canadian manufacturers with consumers about the health risks and addictive character of cigarettes and their tar and nicotine content when measured by standard smoking machines; and
- (vi) The acceptability of the types of advertising and other forms of promotion that have been used in the past by Canadian manufacturers to promote the sale of their products.

**(iii) No damage**

47. Altria states that the Province has (i) suffered no damage, and (ii) incurred none of the Claimed Cost, as a result of anything that the Province alleges in this action that Altria did or failed to do. Altria further states that:

- (a) If Altria breached any duty, as alleged or at all, which is denied, no such breach caused or contributed to the Claimed Cost as alleged or at all;
- (b) If the Province has incurred the Claimed Cost as alleged or at all, which is denied, the Claimed Cost was caused by, without limitation, one or more of the following:
  - (i) The requirement that the Province provide services to insured persons pursuant to the Ontario's *Health Insurance Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.6, as amended, and any predecessor statutes;
  - (ii) The conduct and acts or omissions of the federal government and of the Province;
  - (iii) The conduct and acts or omissions of individual insured persons as further particularized herein; and

- (iv) Disease or risk of disease in individual insured persons unrelated to smoking cigarettes;
- (c) If the Province has incurred the Claimed Cost as alleged or at all, which is denied, the Claimed Cost is exceeded by the tax revenue received by the Province from the sale of cigarettes in Ontario so that no cost is ultimately incurred by the Province;
- (d) If the Province has incurred the Claimed Cost as alleged or at all, which is denied, the Claimed Cost is exceeded by monies received by the Province from the federal government by means of transfer payments, conditional grants and shared-cost programmes for the purpose of funding the Claimed Cost so that no cost is ultimately incurred by the Province; and
- (e) If the Province has incurred the Claimed Cost as alleged or at all, which is denied, the Claimed Cost was inflated by overbilling, waste, abuse, neglect and other misconduct by various of the Province, persons involved in the administration and delivery of health care benefits and insured persons.

**(iv) Causation**

48. Altria admits that smoking causes or contributes to disease. These diseases are complex and may be caused or contributed to by many different factors, including genetics, stress, excess weight, alcohol, environmental factors and other consumer products. If Altria breached any duties, as alleged or at all, which is denied, no such breach caused or contributed to:

- (a) any tobacco related disease in any insured person; or
- (b) any increased risk of tobacco related disease in any insured person.

**(v) Limitations**

49. Altria pleads and relies upon the provisions of the *Limitations Act, 2002*, S.O. 2002, c. 24, Sch. B, as amended, and any predecessor statutes, both in respect of the Province's claim and in respect of the health care costs of those persons on which the Province's claim is alleged to be based and calculated.

**B. DEFENCES ARISING OUT OF THE PROVINCE'S CONDUCT AND KNOWLEDGE**

**(i) General**

50. The Province's claim to recover the Claimed Cost is subject to complete defences, by reason of information the Province knew or should have known, and the Province's own conduct, including:

- (a) The Province's knowledge of health risks associated with cigarette smoking;
- (b) The Province's licensing and regulation of the production, manufacture and sale of cigarettes, including its failure to enforce or implement such regulation to the extent constitutionally permissible;
- (c) The Province's voluntarily undertaking obligations to pay the cost of health care benefits allegedly caused or contributed to by cigarette smoking;
- (d) The Province's failure to establish or delay in developing, or both, policies and practices, including health care expenditures and taxation policies and practices, legislation and regulations, when the Province knew or should have known of the alleged risks and costs it alleges are caused or contributed to by cigarette smoking and ETS;

- (e) The Province's failure to fund, develop and implement health promotion and smoking cessation practices and policies, when the Province knew or should have known of the alleged risks and costs it alleges are caused or contributed to by cigarette smoking and ETS;
- (f) The Province's failure to take any steps prior to commencement of this action to attempt to recover the alleged cost of health care benefits by subrogation;
- (g) The Province's delay in implementing and failure to enforce laws prohibiting the sale to and use of cigarettes by people under the legal age for purchasing them as defined by law from time to time;
- (h) The Province's own decision to regulate many aspects of the tobacco business and to keep the largest portion of the proceeds from the sale of tobacco products;
- (i) The Province's taxation of cigarettes in excess of the cost (if any) of health care benefits allegedly resulting from tobacco related disease or the risk thereof; and
- (j) The Province's own breaches of its duty or duties to insured persons as particularized herein.

51. Further, for decades Ontario has exercised its legislative and regulatory authority with respect to the sale, use and taxation of tobacco, and has either prohibited or regulated all activities and conduct with respect to tobacco and its sale that it considered to be necessary, appropriate or desirable. In this regard, Altria pleads and relies on the *Minors' Protection Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c M.38 (superseded); *Smoking in the Workplace Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c S.13 (superseded); the *Public Vehicles Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c P.54, s. 20; and the *Smoke-Free Ontario*

*Act*, S.O. 1994, c. 10 and O. Reg. 48/06; the *Tobacco Tax Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. T.10, as amended, and any predecessor statutes and regulations.

52. At all material times, the sale, advertising, promotion and consumption of tobacco products have been legal in Ontario subject to certain exceptions and restrictions all of which have been fully complied with by Altria.

53. At all material times, the Province, through its ministers, ministries, departments, servants and agents, has known as much regarding the material risks associated with smoking cigarettes and ETS as Altria.

54. Despite its knowledge of risks associated with smoking cigarettes and ETS, the Province continued to license and regulate the production, manufacturing, advertising, promotion and sale of cigarettes in Ontario and to impose heavy taxation upon, *inter alia*, manufacturers, distributors and consumers of cigarettes.

55. The Province benefits from the taxes imposed on and in relation to the sale of cigarettes in Ontario, which results in complete mitigation of the claim. Altria pleads and relies on the *Tobacco Tax Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. T.10, as amended, and any predecessor statutes.

56. Despite its knowledge of risks associated with cigarette smoking and ETS, the Province took no steps to restrict or limit the sale of cigarettes save for restrictions on sale to persons below a prescribed age and in that case, delayed in implementing such restrictions, and subsequently took no reasonable steps to enforce them. Altria pleads and relies on the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act*, S.O. 1994, c. 10 and O. Reg. 48/06, as amended, and any predecessor statutes.

57. Despite its knowledge of risks associated with cigarette smoking, the Province voluntarily undertakes the obligation of paying for the costs of health care benefits including such costs it alleges are caused or contributed to by cigarette smoking and ETS and sets its taxation and health care policies accordingly.

58. Despite its knowledge of risks associated with cigarette smoking, the Province, at all material times, permitted the sale and consumption of cigarettes in Ontario and derived substantial revenue therefrom.

59. The Province is wrongfully attempting, by statute, to make conduct actionable which was not actionable at the time it occurred. As a result and because the Province waited for decades to commence a claim, Altria pleads that the Province's action should be dismissed on the basis of voluntary assumption of risk, laches, estoppel and the *Limitations Act, 2002*, S.O. 2002, c. 24, Sch. B, as amended, and any predecessor statutes.

**(ii) Voluntary assumption of risk**

60. Altria repeats paragraphs 50-59 hereof and states that at all material times the Province has been aware of health risks associated with cigarette smoking and ETS. Accordingly, the Province voluntarily assumes such risks, whatever their extent, in incurring the costs it alleges are caused or contributed to by cigarette smoking and ETS, and the Province is barred from recovering any of the Claimed Cost from Altria in this action by reason of its own actions and its voluntary assumption of risk.

**(iii) Contributory negligence**

61. Altria repeats paragraphs 50-59 hereof and states that if the Province has incurred the Claimed Cost as alleged or at all, which is denied, then the Claimed Cost was caused or

contributed to, in whole or in part, by the acts or omissions of the federal government acting alone or as agent for or in concert with the Province, or due to the acts or omissions of the Province as pleaded herein, and not any act or omission of Altria. Altria pleads and relies upon the *Negligence Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. N.1, as amended, and any predecessor statutes.

62. Altria repeats and relies on paragraphs 50-59 hereof and states that it was governments that decided many aspects of the tobacco business and who kept the largest portion of the proceeds from the sale of tobacco products. To the extent insured persons, including under-aged persons, were not informed of the risks associated with smoking cigarettes or purchased low tar cigarettes as a result of a misrepresentation (all of which is denied), it is because the Province or the federal government, or both, failed to perform their obligations adequately.

**(iv) The Province cannot profit from its wrongful conduct**

63. Altria repeats paragraphs 24-42 and 50-59 hereof and states that the Province is barred from recovering any damages or costs it has suffered, the existence of which is denied, as any damages or costs flowed from its participation as set out herein in conduct which the Province itself alleges in the Statement of Claim constituted breaches of duty.

**(v) Legal and equitable bars**

64. Altria repeats paragraphs 50-59 hereof and states that by reason of the facts set out therein and the knowledge, conduct and delay of the Province and the prejudice thereby caused to Altria, the Province is barred in law and in equity from advancing the claims made in the Statement of Claim against Altria. Altria pleads and relies on the *Health Insurance Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.6, as amended, and any predecessor statutes.

**(vi) Mitigation**

65. Altria repeats paragraphs 50-59 hereof and states that if the Province has incurred the Claimed Cost, as alleged or at all, which is denied, the Province has failed to mitigate the Claimed Cost.

**C. DEFENCES ARISING OUT OF INDIVIDUAL CONDUCT**

**(i) General**

66. If the Province has incurred the Claimed Cost as alleged or at all, which is denied, the Claimed Cost was caused by, and the Province's claim to recover the Claimed Cost is subject to complete defences by reason of the conduct of individual insured persons, including their voluntary decisions to commence or continue smoking with awareness of the associated risks.

67. All of the insured persons who smoke or have smoked cigarettes were aware or had been warned of risks associated with smoking.

68. Each insured person became aware or received warnings of risks associated with smoking by various means, including, without limitation, one or more of the following:

- (a) Warnings, including on the packaging of cigarettes, as required from time to time pursuant to federal and provincial legislation and regulations and voluntary codes of compliance by Canadian tobacco manufacturers;
- (b) Mandatory displays, signs and other warnings required by provincial legislation in premises where sales of cigarettes take place;
- (c) Discussions and writing, including advertising, in all forms of media including newspapers, magazines, journals, television, movies and radio;

- (d) Education programmes including courses, seminars and lectures and educational literature and other media;
- (e) Oral and written warnings from physicians and other health practitioners;
- (f) Oral and written warnings from family members, friends and other acquaintances;  
and
- (g) The common general understandings and historical beliefs about adverse health consequences attributed to cigarette smoking dating back hundreds of years.

69. By reason of the foregoing, Altria states that all of the insured persons who smoke or have smoked cigarettes were aware or had been warned of associated risks.

70. Each of those insured persons who commenced or continued to smoke cigarettes did so with awareness of the risks associated with smoking, and each such insured person voluntarily consented to accept such risks.

71. The cause in fact and in law of the commencement and continuation of the use of cigarettes by insured persons was a voluntary choice to smoke cigarettes with awareness of the associated risks. Altria had and has no legal duty to such persons, or alternatively, no legal duty to such persons that has not been fulfilled.

72. Altria denies that any insured persons began, continued, or were unable to cease smoking by reason of any of the alleged breaches of duty of Altria, or that any alleged breach of duty caused or contributed to any alleged tobacco related disease or increased costs of tobacco related disease in any insured person.

73. If the federal government did not act as an agent for or in concert with the Province, then to the extent insured persons were not adequately informed about the risks of smoking cigarettes or purchased low tar cigarettes as the result of a misrepresentation (all of which is denied), they did so as a result of the breach of duty owed to them by the federal government.

74. Finally, to the extent the Province incurred health care costs due to smoking by insured persons, which is denied, the cost was caused by Aboriginal Manufacturers who breached duties owed to insured persons by the way they packaged and sold their products.

**(ii) Voluntary assumption of risk**

75. Altria repeats paragraphs 66-74 hereof and states that at all material times individual insured persons were aware of health risks associated with cigarette smoking. Accordingly, such persons voluntarily assumed such risks, whatever their extent, when they decided to commence and continue smoking.

**(iii) Contributory negligence**

76. Altria repeats paragraphs 66-74 hereof and states that if the Province has incurred the Claimed Cost as alleged or at all, which is denied, then the Claimed Cost was caused or contributed to, in whole or in part, by the acts or omissions of individual insured persons as pleaded herein, and not any act or omission of Altria. Altria pleads and relies upon the provisions of the *Negligence Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. N.1, as amended, and any predecessor statutes.

**(iv) Legal and equitable bars**

77. Altria repeats paragraphs 66-74 hereof and states that by reason of the facts set out therein and the knowledge and conduct of insured persons and the prejudice thereby caused to

Altria, the Province is barred at law and in equity from advancing the claims made in the Statement of Claim against Altria.

**(v) Limitations**

78. Altria pleads and relies upon the provisions of the *Limitations Act, 2002*, S.O. 2002, c. 24, Sch. B, as amended, and any predecessor statutes, in respect of the claims of any individual insured person upon which the Province's cause of action is alleged to rest.

79. Altria pleads and relies upon the limitation provisions in the *Competition Act*, RSC 1985, c. C-34, as amended, and any predecessor statutes.

**(vi) Mitigation**

80. Altria repeats paragraphs 66-74 hereof and states that if the Province has incurred the Claimed Cost as alleged or at all, which is denied, individual insured persons have failed to mitigate the Claimed Cost.

**RELIEF SOUGHT BY ALTRIA**

81. In the circumstances, Altria submits that the Province's claim should be dismissed, with costs.

Date: April 29, 2016

**McCARTHY TÉTRAULT LLP**  
Suite 5300, TD Bank Tower  
Box 48, 66 Wellington Street West  
Toronto, ON M5K 1E6

**R. Paul Steep** LSUC No. 21869L  
Tel: 416 601-7998

**Sarit Batner** LSUC No. 42797N  
Tel: 416 601-7756

**Byron Shaw** LSUC No. 57745V  
Tel: 416 601-8256  
Fax: 416 868-0673

Lawyers for the Defendant Altria Group Inc.

TO: **MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**  
Crown Law Office - Civil  
8th Floor, 720 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2S9

**Antonin I. Pribetic**  
Tel: (416) 212-1333

**Shahana Kar**  
Tel: (416) 212-6455

**Lynne M. McArdle**  
Tel: (416) 212-7138

**Farzin Yousefian**  
Tel: (416) 314-6029

Fax: (416) 326-4181

Lawyers for the Plaintiff

TO: **GOWLING WLG (CANADA) LLP**  
1 First Canadian Place  
1600 - 100 King Street West  
Toronto ON M5X 1G5

**Michael S.F. Watson**  
Tel: 416 369-7245

**Deborah Templer**  
Tel: 416 862-5785

Fax: 416 862-7661

Lawyers for the Defendants, Rothmans Inc. and Rothmans Benson & Hedges,  
Inc.

TO: **HARPER GREY LLP**  
320 Vancouver Center  
650 West Georgia Street  
Vancouver, BC V6B 4P7

**Christopher M. Rusnak**  
Tel: 604 687-0411

**Siobhan Sams**  
Tel: 604 895-2893

Fax: 604 669-9385

Lawyers for the Defendant, Carreras Rothmans Limited

TO: **BORDEN LADNER GERVAIS LLP**  
Scotia Plaza  
40 King Street West  
Toronto ON M5H 3Y4

**Guy J. Pratte**  
Tel: 416 350-2638  
Fax: 416 367-6749

**Ira Nishisato**  
Tel: 416 367-6349  
Fax: 416 361-2727

**Cindy Clarke**  
Tel: 416 367-6203  
Fax: 416 361-2785

Lawyers for the Defendants, JTI-MacDonald Corp., R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and R.J. Reynolds Tobacco International Inc.

TO: **OSLER, HOSKIN & HARCOURT LLP**  
Box 50, 1 First Canadian Place  
Toronto ON M5X 1B8

**Deborah Glendinning**  
**Craig T. Lockwood**

Tel: 416 326-2111  
Fax: 416 862-6666

Lawyers for the Defendant, Imperial Tobacco Canada Limited

TO: **STIKEMAN ELLIOTT LLP**  
5300 Commerce Court West  
199 Bay Street  
Toronto ON M5L 1B9

**David Byers**  
Tel: 416 869-5697

**Vanessa Voakes**  
Tel: 416 869-5538  
Fax: 416 947-0866

Lawyers for the Defendants, British American Tobacco p.l.c., B.A.T. Industries  
p.l.c. and British American Tobacco (Investments) Limited

TO: **ORMSTON LIST FRAWLEY LLP**  
720 – 40 University Avenue  
Toronto ON M5J 1T1

**John P. Ormston**  
Tel: 416 594-0791 ext. 111  
Fax: 416 594-9690

Lawyers for the Defendant, Canadian Tobacco Manufacturers' Council

B E T W E E N :

Her Majesty The Queen in Right of Ontario

- and -

Rothmans Inc., Rothmans, et al.

Court File No. CV-09-387984

**ONTARIO**  
**SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE**  
Proceeding Commenced at TORONTO

**STATEMENT OF DEFENCE OF THE  
DEFENDANT ALTRIA GROUP, INC.**

**MCCARTHY TÉTRAULT LLP**  
Box 48, Suite 5300  
Toronto Dominion Bank Tower  
Toronto, ON M5K 1E6

**R. Paul Steep** LSUC No. 21869L  
Tel: 416 601-7998

**Sarit Batner** LSUC No. 42797N  
Tel: 416 601-7756

**Byron Shaw** LSUC No. 57745V  
Tel: 416 601-8256

Fax: 416 868-0673

Lawyers for the Defendant Altria Group,  
Inc.