

Tobacco Transparency Consulting

<u>Team Member Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Major</u>
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Advisor(s): Dr. Ed J. Portugal

Topic Title: The Ethics of Nicotine Imports: A Closer Look at Zyn’s Role in U.S. Markets

Audience: Targeting Board Members of Big Tobacco Company Phillip Morris

Sustainable Development Goals

SDG #3: Good Health and Well Being

Executive Summary

ZYN, a manufacturer of flavored nicotine pouches, raises significant ethical concerns due to its growing popularity among younger consumers and the minimal regulatory oversight on its production and sales. Although ZYN advertises its products as “tobacco-free,” it still contains nicotine derived from tobacco, along with additives that can contribute to mouth and throat irritation, potentially increasing the risk of cancer over prolonged use. The marketing of these pouches—often offered in sweet or fruity flavors—can be especially appealing to a younger audience, sparking criticism that this promotional approach may entice first-time users to experiment with an addictive product.

Additionally, while the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) imposes stricter regulations on traditional tobacco products, loopholes and less comprehensive oversight for newer nicotine products allow ZYN pouches to be sold more widely with limited disclosure about their exact ingredients. This gap not only undermines the ability of consumers, particularly teens, to make well-informed decisions, but it also poses broader public health challenges.

Philip Morris, one of the world’s largest tobacco companies, has a long history of leveraging regulatory loopholes to maintain and expand its market share. Philip Morris invests heavily in sophisticated marketing and lobbying efforts, creating an image of reduced harm or modern innovation, despite the carcinogenic nature of the nicotine and chemical additives involved. This strategy allows the firm to capitalize on evolving regulations—particularly those not yet fully defined by the FDA.

Our solution is that tighter regulations, increased transparency about ingredients, and clearer warning labels are needed to protect vulnerable populations from the potential long-term harms associated with nicotine use and cancer risks.