

# Tobacco companies criticize federal judge

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Tobacco companies on Wednesday accused a federal judge of forcing them to inaccurately describe themselves as unscrupulous villains who continue to deceive the public.

In an appeals court filing, the industry said statements ordered by the judge in a government lawsuit would only trigger public anger against the companies and should be scrapped.

U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler ordered the largest cigarette makers to admit they had lied for decades about the dangers of smoking, and to publicize a [federal court](#)'s conclusion that Altria, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco, Lorillard, and Philip Morris USA deliberately deceived the public.

The companies said the statement was misleading and too broad.

In 2009, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit directed Kessler to craft corrective statements confined to purely factual and uncontroversial information that would reveal previously hidden truths about the [tobacco industry](#)'s products.

But the companies said in the new filing that Kessler went beyond those instructions and ordered a series of inflammatory statements that require the defendants to denigrate themselves.

The companies said that in accordance with the appeals court's ruling, they stand ready to disseminate statements that provide public health information about cigarettes.

Arguments in the case will be heard on Feb. 23.

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