



**Office of the Attorney General
Paul G. Summers**

NEWS RELEASE

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**TN ATTY GENERAL RECEIVES POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM COUNTRY MUSIC
ARTIST GRETCHEN WILSON REGARDING "SKOAL RING" PERFORMANCE**

Tennessee Attorney General Paul G. Summers today received a call from country music artist Gretchen Wilson's representative Dale Morris saying that the artist never intended to promote Skoal or the use of smokeless tobacco to youth. She has also voluntarily agreed to stop displaying the product during her performance of "Skoal Ring."

Wilson's representative confirmed she has no relationship with United States Smokeless Tobacco Company, the manufacturers of the Skoal product.

"I appreciate Ms. Wilson's attitude," Attorney General Summers said. "It is my job to see that the tobacco companies abide by the Master Settlement Agreement. It appears that is now the case in this instance. We made a request of Ms. Wilson and she complied with our request. I thank her very much. This quick and positive response speaks well of her as a professional artist, as a good citizen, as a parent and as a role model for youth."

Attorney General Summers wrote a letter to Gretchen Wilson and the United States Smokeless Tobacco Company after receiving reports the entertainer had removed a can of the smokeless tobacco during her performances of her new song, "Skoal Ring." General Summers requested the artist consider the potential negative impact displaying smokeless tobacco products during her concerts may have on youth. He also asked Wilson to discontinue displaying the tobacco products during her concerts and to make a public statement about the hazards of using smokeless tobacco.

Morris said Gretchen Wilson did not use a Skoal can as a prop at the Cincinnati concert last night after receiving General Summers' letter and will not do so at future concerts. She has also stated through her representative that she has no relationship with United States Smokeless Tobacco Company, the manufacturers of the Skoal product.

If parents need information on tobacco usage, they can visit Centers for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/factsheets/smokelesstobacco.htm> and the campaign for Tobacco Free Kids website at <http://tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0003.pdf>.