

# Van Grack proposes cigarette tax to fight crime

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ROCKVILLE - Eighth Congressional District candidate Steven Van Grack Tuesday called for a 11.50 per pack cigarette tax to generate \$22 billion to \$4 billion a year to fight crime.

He said the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement measure now before Congress has "many positive

programs," but he called it "inadequate to prevent and control crime."

The Democrat, hoping to challenge incumbent Rep. Constance Morela, R-MD, in November said he proposed the cigarette tax instead of savings from scheduled cuts in the federal work force now under consideration.

The yield from his proposed cigarette tax, he said would be "four to five times as great a commitment as

has been presently made and this method of raising these funds is long overdue."

Mr. Van Grack also called for intensifying the gun control program through legislation and education. He said "the Brady Bill was a step in the right direction, but great strides must follow."

He pledged "to be an advocate of the strongest order to ban all assault

weapons and to severely limit the possession of handguns." He said "I support laws to tighten gun dealer licensing, require the reporting of all private sales of handguns and a strong education program on the dangers of owning a gun."

Calling for dramatic reform of the criminal justice system, Mr. Van Grack said "we must begin with cracking down on gun violence."