



## **CIGAR RIGHTS OF AMERICA**

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**\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\***

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### **First Annual Florida Cigar Summit a Success - Industry Leaders Address Florida Legislative Delegation -**

**Fairfax, VA** - On Friday, February 26, cigar industry leaders from the retail, manufacturing, and trade association ranks joined forces for a unified message to the Florida political community - "Help protect the cigar industry in Florida."

In a true precedent setting moment, the briefing on the state of the cigar industry took place at the historic J.C. Newman Cigar Company facility in Tampa, Florida. Select members of the Florida legislature were briefed on the implications of tax and regulatory policy on this staple industry of the Florida economy.

With over 100 in attendance, nearly a dozen members of the Florida House and Senate heard from leaders in the national cigar industry. Moderating the discussion was Eric Newman, President of J.C. Newman Cigar Company, who also serves as this year's chairman of the Cigar Association of America, and Jeff Borysiewicz, owner of Corona Cigar Company, and board member for the International Premium Cigar & Pipe Retailers Association, and Cigar Rights of America.

Also attending was Mike Prendergast, candidate for the US Congress for Florida's 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, who vowed to take his anti-tax philosophy to Washington.

Attending members of the Florida legislature were provided a tour of the J.C. Newman Cigar Company, while being briefed on what the Florida cigar industry means for local employment, with over 250 retail establishments and 60 family owned manufacturers, leaf dealers, importers and cigar corporate headquarters operations throughout the state, equating to over 5,500 jobs. It was further noted that over 70% of the cigars sold in the United States are either made or imported through Florida.

Cigar Rights of America joined the Cigar Association of America and the International Premium Cigar & Pipe Retailers Association in co-hosting the forum. Jeff Borysiewicz noted, "We hope that this event sets a national example of the type of discussion that needs to take place in every state. By educating our political leadership at the local, state and federal level on the implications of tax and regulatory policy on cigar consumers and the entire supply chain, hopefully they will be less inclined to consider harmful legislation and budget measures."

#### **About Cigar Rights of America**

Cigar Rights of America (CRA) was founded on the principle of fighting for the freedom to enjoy premium cigars. A consumer-based, non-profit public advocacy organization that works with local, state and federal governments to protect the freedoms of cigar enthusiasts, CRA works with its constituency of members including manufacturers, retailers and cigar enthusiasts to focus on opposing restrictive smoking bans and increased taxation of cigars. [www.CigarRights.org](http://www.CigarRights.org)

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