

THE NEED FOR ADEQUATE PREVENTION FUNDING

Tobacco use kills more than 400,000 Americans every year and costs the nation almost \$100 billion in health care costs annually. Nearly 90 percent of smokers began as teens, and nearly 4,000 kids try their first cigarette every day. States can substantially reduce smoking and other tobacco use by establishing a well-funded, sustained, and accountable, comprehensive tobacco prevention program that employs a variety of evidence-based approaches. Nothing else will successfully compete against the addictive power of nicotine and the tobacco industry's aggressive marketing tactics.

Unfortunately, despite receiving massive amounts of annual revenue from tobacco taxes and the state tobacco lawsuit settlements with the cigarette companies, the vast majority of states are falling woefully short in meeting funding levels for tobacco prevention programs recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For example:

- For Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, states will spend less than 2% of what they are expected to receive from tobacco taxes and the tobacco settlement on tobacco prevention and cessation programs.
- Nationwide, total funding for state tobacco prevention and cessation programs for FY 2012 is \$456.7 million. This amounts to just 12 percent of the \$3.7 billion the CDC recommends for all states combined.
- Connecticut, Nevada, New Hampshire, Ohio and the District of Columbia have not given any state funds to tobacco prevention programs in FY 2012. All but two states (Alaska and North Dakota) failed to fully fund their prevention programs at the recommended CDC level.

Unless properly financed, tobacco prevention will have little effect against the marketing efforts of the tobacco industry. The tobacco industry spends \$10.5 billion a year, nearly \$29 million a day, each year on advertising and promotion, much of which influences kids to smoke.

States need to step up their efforts to reduce tobacco use by implementing comprehensive tobacco prevention and cessation programs. Even in these tough economic times states can increase tobacco taxes to help fill budget gaps and use some of the revenue to fund tobacco prevention programs.

By itself, a significant increase to a state's tobacco tax rates would directly reduce smoking, especially among youth. But combining tobacco tax increases with expanded state tobacco prevention efforts would increase and expand the tobacco use declines in the state, thereby saving even more lives and more money.

Comprehensive tobacco prevention and cessation programs are a proven method of preventing kids from starting to smoke and helping adult smokers quit. By investing adequate amounts to prevent and reduce tobacco use, states can better protect the health of state citizens, reduce government and private sector healthcare costs in the state, and increase worker productivity.

For more information about state tobacco prevention efforts, please visit:

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/index.php?CategoryID=6>