Advocacy is our purpose

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North Carolina Alliance for Health
NCAH is an independent, statewide coalition of individuals, businesses and nonprofits working to promote obesity and tobacco prevention policies before NC's legislative and executive branches.
NC Alliance for Health

• More than 75 organizations from across the state have joined or partnered with the Alliance to promote efforts to:

  – Raise NC’s cigarette tax;
  – Eliminate secondhand smoke from worksites & public places;
  – Address obesity issues by promoting PE, child nutrition programs and issues around built environments.
Tobacco-Use Prevention Policy Priorities:

• Long Term: Secure full CDC-recommended funding for evidence-based tobacco prevention and cessation programs in North Carolina ($106 million as of October 2007).

• Intermediate Term: Secure at least 25% of Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) funds to fund evidence-based tobacco use prevention and cessation to improve health and save health care costs.

• Short Term: Seek $17.3 million in recurring funding for evidence-based tobacco use prevention and cessation programs.
Current Status of Tobacco Control Programs

- FY 2012 budget eliminated the Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF), which for nearly 10 years had used Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) dollars to fund the majority of NC’s tobacco prevention and cessation programs.

- FY 2012 budget transferred $22 million of the remaining HWTF dollars as one-time funding to the DHHS for public health programs, including tobacco use prevention.

- DHHS allocated $17.3 million to tobacco prevention and cessation in FY2012, but this funding is non-recurring.

- All programs will end June 30, 2012 unless the General Assembly acts to continue these successful programs.
What does NC get for $17.3 million?

• **Tobacco Reality Unfiltered- TRU**
  - Community-based programs (TRU youth programs) combined with mass media campaign (TRU media ads), per CDC evidence-based recommendation
  - 90% of youth who had seen the TRU ads reported they were convincing and attention-grabbing and more than 95% said ads gave them good reasons not to smoke

• **Quitline NC**
  - Confidential phone tobacco treatment service available for free; when combined with cessation medications, triple a tobacco user’s chances of quitting successfully
  - 7,000 clients have stopped using tobacco (Nov 2005 – May 2011)
What does NC get for $17.3 million? (cont)

• **Tobacco Free Colleges Initiative**
  – To date, 42 smoke-free or tobacco-free college campus policies in NC protect over 175,000 NC college students and 30 of the 58 community colleges have adopted a tobacco-free campus policy.

• **Reduce Access to Cigarettes Among Youth**
  – HWTF funded Substance Abuse Services Section and ALE to launch statewide education and enforcement of the state youth access to tobacco law; Reduced retailer violations from 18 % in 2003 to 10.3 % in 2010.

• **You Quit, Two Quit**
  – Program works to ensure comprehensive systems in place to screen and treat tobacco use in women, pregnant and postpartum mothers, with a focus on low-income women, new mothers and recidivism prevention.
Why preserve tobacco control programs?

- NC has an **OBLIGATION** to spend significant state dollars on tobacco use prevention and cessation programs.

  - Every year the state receives MSA funds which are specifically intended to help states address the health and financial toll of **tobacco use**. North Carolina received a total of $138 million in MSA funds in FY 2011-12.

  - NC spends just a fraction of its tobacco revenue (from tobacco taxes and MSA dollars) on **tobacco control** – an abysmal four percent of the $431 million taken in by the state.* This pales in comparison to the $396 million spent annually by tobacco companies to market their products in our state.

Why preserve tobacco control programs? (cont.)

These Programs WORK! Since North Carolina first received MSA funding in 2002:

- Public schools in all 100 counties have gone tobacco-free;
- The middle school smoking rate in North Carolina has been cut by more than half (from 9.3% to 4.3%), and the high school smoking rate has dropped by a third (from 27.3% to 16.7%), representing the lowest youth smoking rates in state history;
- There are 53,000 fewer youth smokers in the state;
- 7,000 North Carolinians have ended their addiction to tobacco with the help of QuitlineNC; and,
- In 2003, 13% of NC women reported smoking during pregnancy. By 2008, that declined to 10%.
Estimated Health Impact if Programs Eliminated

According to the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, if tobacco prevention funding is eliminated in NC (currently at $17.3 million annually):

• The youth smoking rate will increase by 2.8%;

• 17,500 more North Carolina kids will grow up to become addicted adult smokers;

• 5,600 more kids will grow up to die prematurely from smoking; and,

• Future healthcare expenditures in the state will increase by $306.2 million. State Medicaid healthcare spending ALONE will increase by $32.4 million.

Questions-and-Answers

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