



American Heart Association



Tackling Tobacco Use in Illinois

Save Lives. Reduce Health Care Costs. Generate Revenue.

Health Costs of Tobacco

The use of tobacco products remains the nation's number one cause of preventable death. Tobacco use is responsible for nearly 1 in 5 deaths nationwide. In Illinois:

- An estimated 18,300 deaths are caused by smoking each year.ⁱ
- 15.5 percent of adults and 7.6 percent of high school students smoke cigarettes.ⁱ
- 4,800 kids under 18 become new daily smokers each year.ⁱ
- If nothing is done to curb the tobacco epidemic an estimated 230,000 Illinois kids under 18 today will ultimately die prematurely from smoking-related diseases.ⁱ
- Over 29 percent of cancer deaths are attributable to smoking.ⁱ
- In addition to cancer, tobacco increases the risk of heart attack, stroke, COPD, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, preterm delivery, stillbirth, low birth weight, SIDS, and other diseases.ⁱⁱ

Economic Costs of Smoking

Tobacco-related illnesses are expensive and harmful for all of us. Each year in Illinois, smoking is estimated to cost \$5.49 billion in direct health care costs, including \$1.9 billion in Medicaid costs.ⁱ Additionally, Illinois experiences \$5.27 billion in smoking-caused productivity losses annually.ⁱ

Raise it for kids. Raise it for health. Raise it to save lives.

The Solution: Effective Tobacco Control

Regular and significant tobacco tax increases, along with fully funding evidence-based tobacco prevention and cessation programs and comprehensive smoke-free laws can reduce tobacco use.

Increasing the Illinois cigarette tax by \$1.00 per pack would generate \$159.35 million in new annual revenue for the state as well as:ⁱⁱⁱ

- Reduce youth smoking by 11 percent.
- Prevent 28,700 kids under 18 from becoming adults who smoke.
- Help 48,700 adults who currently smoke quit.
- Prevent 21,000 premature smoking-caused deaths.
- Provide \$1.56 billion in long-term health care cost savings from adult and youth smoking declines.

Increasing the tax on other tobacco products at the same time would produce additional health and economic benefits for Illinois. It is important that tax increases apply to all tobacco products at an equivalent rate to encourage people to quit rather than switch to a cheaper product as well as to prevent youth from starting to use any tobacco product. To parallel the new \$2.98 per pack cigarette tax the state's tax on all other tobacco products should be increased to 64 percent of the wholesale price.

Investing revenue from the tax increase in the Illinois tobacco prevention and cessation programs is crucial to prevent kids from starting to use tobacco and help people already addicted to quit.

ⁱ Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. The Toll of Tobacco in Illinois. Updated November 15, 2018. http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/facts_issues/toll_us/illinois

ⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking. Updated May 14, 2017. https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/

ⁱⁱⁱ American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and Tobaccoomics. New Revenues, Public Health Benefits & Cost Savings from a \$1.00 Cigarette Tax Increase in Illinois. Updated February 21, 2019.

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