

TOBACCO CONTROL

Issue: Along with a substantial increase in the tax on tobacco products, there are other components which comprise tobacco control initiatives. Consistent with the Coalition for a Tobacco Free West Virginia, these initiatives include: clean indoor air policies that provide protection to the public from secondhand smoke; and a commitment from policymakers to use state funds for tobacco use prevention, cessation and education programs designed to reduce or eliminate tobacco use, and exposure to secondhand smoke.

Background: *Clean Indoor Air*

Clean Indoor Air (CIA) policies are most effective when they are implemented by local agencies with opportunities for local input and implementation at a local level. Some level of CIA regulation through local boards of health currently covers all of West Virginia's 55 counties. They are most effective when they are accompanied by consistent public education campaigns addressing the harmful nature of secondhand smoke and place emphasis on the benefits of smoke-free environments and workplaces.

Tobacco Prevention Funding

Tobacco settlement funding for prevention has been \$5.65 million annually since FY 2000-2001. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends West Virginia spend a minimum of \$27.8 million to effectively combat tobacco use through a comprehensive prevention program.

WVHA Position: WVHA supports policies that provide protection to the public from secondhand smoke. WVHA supports the use of state funds for tobacco use prevention, cessation, and education programs designed to reduce or eliminate tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke. Consistent with the Coalition for a Tobacco Free West Virginia, WVHA believes tobacco funding should adhere to the five principles recommended by the CDC for a successful tobacco prevention program. These principles state that a prevention program must be:

- Comprehensive

- Well funded
- Sustained over a long period of time
- Operate free and clear of political and tobacco industry influence
- Address high-risk and diverse populations.

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