

# TOBACCO EXCISE TAXES



## **Our Goal:**

The goal of the Coalition for a Tobacco Free Alabama is to establish a fully tobacco free society. Tobacco is a highly addictive substance and the single most preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States. The Coalition for a Tobacco Free Alabama supports measures to eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke, eliminate tobacco use by youth, promote cessation treatment, and deter tobacco use in the general population.

## **Why Increase Tobacco Excise Taxes?**

Smoking kills more people than alcohol, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined. Thousands more die from smokeless tobacco and fires caused by smoking. Raising the tobacco excise tax is one of the most effective ways to reduce smoking, deter youth initiation, save lives and raise government revenue even in tough economic times. Consider the following:

- Nearly 8,700 Alabamians die each year as a result of smoking-related diseases.
- Tobacco use is estimated to cost the state of Alabama approximately \$1.49 billion annually from direct healthcare costs. Of those costs, \$238 million are covered by the already strapped state Medicaid program.
- Approximately 10,000 Alabama kids (under 18) become smokers each year.

An increase in the cigarette tax alone by \$1 would:

- Prevent 34,200 children from becoming addicted adult smokers; save 20,000 Alabamians from premature deaths; and help 33,200 quit smoking.
- Save nearly \$15 million over five years in health care savings from fewer smoking caused heart attacks, strokes and lung cancer treatments.
- Generate an estimated \$212 million in new annual revenue to the state.

## **Our Position:**

The Coalition for a Tobacco Free Alabama supports an increase in tax rates on all tobacco products to prevent switching to lower-taxed and lower priced tobacco products. We support taxing other tobacco products at a percentage of wholesale price versus a simple weight-based tax. Specific to cigarette taxes we support \$1.00 increase and allocation of at least a portion of the revenue generated put toward tobacco control, prevention and cessation programs.



For more information, visit  
[tobaccofreealabama.org](http://tobaccofreealabama.org)