



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tobacco Funds Up in Smoke

New Report Finds Only Four Cents of Every Dollar New York Raises from Tobacco Helps Smokers Quit or Keeps Kids from Smoking

(Albany, NY) (September 19, 2011) –Promises from state leaders that monies from New York’s lawsuit against tobacco companies and from cigarette taxes would go to help the state’s smokers quit and to keep kids from smoking have gone *Up in Smoke*.

It's a key finding of a new report released today by the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association in NY, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, League of Women Voters/NYS, and NYPIRG. The report documents that the state spends less than four cents of every dollar it raises from tobacco on anti-smoking programs. In addition to hundreds of millions of dollars that it receives each year from the Master Settlement Agreement, New York reaps nearly \$1.5 billion a year through the highest cigarette tax in the nation (\$4.35 per pack).

Up in Smoke calls on New York to spend one dime of every dollar of revenue from tobacco on tobacco control. The organizations urged increasing funding for the state’s Tobacco Control Program (TCP) from \$41.4 million to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended \$254 million over the next few years.

The report analyzes the adequacy of New York’s anti-smoking efforts, given the minimal funding for tobacco control programs in light of the significant resources available. It finds that although New York has raised \$10.5 billion from tobacco sales over the past six years, less than four percent of that amount, \$406.4 million, has been spent to fund the state’s anti-smoking efforts via the TCP. In fact, funding for this program has been cut in half over the past three years. During the current fiscal year, New York will spend only 16 percent of the amount recommended by the CDC. When more adequately funded, the TCP achieved successes in the effort to curb tobacco use, especially in preventing young people from becoming smokers. Teenage and adult tobacco use rates have fallen faster in New York than in the U.S. as a whole.

The TCP operates in every corner of the state. The program works in local communities to give smokers the one-on-one assistance they need to quit. It funds youth smoking prevention groups; the Smokers Quitline, including free nicotine patches for those who want to quit; as well as hard-hitting effective media campaigns.

The toll tobacco takes on New York is devastating. More than 25,000 New Yorkers will die this year of smoking-related diseases and more than \$8.1 billion is spent on health care costs each year to treat smoking caused illnesses. Lost wages and productivity due to tobacco use total \$6.05 billion a year. The current adult smoking rate is 15.5 percent and the teen smoking rate is 14.8 percent.

To get a copy of the report, visit www.cancer.org/nynj.