



# Tackling Tobacco Use in Mississippi

## ***The Toll 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 Mississippi:

- An estimated 5,400 deaths are caused by smoking each year.
- 22.5% of adults and 15.2% of high school students smoke.
- 1,800 kids under 18 become new daily smokers each year.
- Over 30% of cancer deaths in Mississippi are caused by smoking.

## ***The Cost of Tobacco***

Tobacco-related illnesses are expensive and harmful for all of us. In Mississippi, smoking is estimated to cost \$1.23 billion in direct health care costs, including \$319.7 million in Medicaid costs.<sup>i</sup> Additionally, Mississippi experiences \$1.8 billion in productivity losses annually.<sup>i</sup>

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**Increasing tobacco taxes and investing in tobacco prevention makes dollars and sense.**

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## ***The Solution***

**Increasing Mississippi's cigarette tax by \$1.50 per pack** would generate \$166.8 million in much needed revenue for the state, as well as<sup>ii</sup>:

- Reduce youth smoking by 16.9%.
- Prevent 22,800 kids under 18 from becoming adult smokers.
- Help 26,500 current adult smokers quit.
- Prevent 14,000 premature smoking-caused deaths.
- Provide \$1.01 billion in long-term health care cost savings from adult and youth smoking declines.
- Reduce the number of smoking-affected pregnancies by 3,500 over a five-year period.

**Increasing the wholesale tax on other tobacco products** at the same time would produce additional health and economic benefits for Mississippi. Currently, other tobacco products are taxed at a lower rate than cigarettes, making them an appealing alternative for price-sensitive consumers including youth.

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<sup>i</sup> Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. The Toll of Tobacco in Mississippi. Updated July 26, 2017.  
[http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/facts\\_issues/toll\\_us/Mississippi](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/facts_issues/toll_us/Mississippi)

<sup>ii</sup> American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and Tobacconomics. New Revenues, Public Health Benefits & Cost Savings From a \$1.50 Cigarette Tax Increase in Mississippi. Updated July 12, 2017.