



Faith United Against Tobacco



Alliance for a Healthy South

Case statement/Core messages:

Community Catalyst, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, the American Cancer Society, the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, Faith United Against Tobacco, Families USA, and health care and tobacco control advocates are undertaking a joint campaign to increase the cigarette tax in southeastern states by \$1 per pack in order to protect and expand health access, reduce youth smoking, and increase funding for tobacco prevention and cessation programs. Each state will develop its own plan for use of the revenue generated by the cigarette tax increase.

The time is right. Families and state governments are being severely impacted by the current economic conditions, and rising health care costs have created a huge burden. Unfortunately, states are slashing budgets, including those for important health care programs. **A tobacco tax increase will raise millions of dollars in each state – additional revenue that could help fund essential health programs.** This would put the health of families first at a time when Americans most need the security of knowing they can get care.

Raising the tax by \$1 will generate billions of dollars across the region for health care –and the federal government will more than double money devoted to health care for families. Right now, states are leaving money on the table that could help make sure working families can see a doctor.

Raising the tax by \$1 to fund important health programs will protect local health care jobs and help support hospitals and doctors caring for the neediest among us.

Raising the tax by \$1 will save states, taxpayers, and businesses billions of dollars by reducing health care costs due to tobacco use.

Raising the tax by \$1 will reduce smoking, particularly among children, save lives, and provide a healthier workforce.

Devoting a portion of the money raised for tobacco prevention and cessation programs – at funding levels recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – will save even more lives, and improve the region's productivity.

No child should go without health care. Working families deserve the peace of mind that comes with knowing they can see a doctor when they are in need of care. Hospitals and doctors need support to continue to care for our communities.

In the Southeast, raising tobacco taxes is good for the economy, good for health, and good for working families.