



American Cancer Society
Cancer Action Network
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September 24, 2007

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action NetworkSM (ACS CAN), we strongly urge members of the Congress to support passage of the bipartisan compromise on the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) reauthorization to be voted on this week. This bill reauthorizes the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and pays for an expansion of the program with a 61-cent increase in the federal tobacco tax.

ACS CAN, and its sister charity organization American Cancer Society (the Society), have consistently fought for public policies that discourage the use of tobacco by young people and encourage smokers to quit. Research indicates that a ten percent increase in the price per pack of cigarettes reduces youth smoking by seven percent and overall cigarette consumption by about four percent.

In addition:

- A 61-cent increase in the federal cigarette tax would prevent nearly 1.9 million children in the United States from becoming lifelong tobacco users and would discourage more than 1.4 million adults from continuing their deadly habit.
- The 61-cent tax increase would prevent more than 900,000 smoking-attributable premature deaths, including approximately 590,000 children who would not cut their lives short from tobacco use.
- A 61-cent increase in the federal cigarette tax would show significant health care savings from reduced death and disease from tobacco. In the first five years after implementation:
 - Health care savings from reduced tobacco-related complications during pregnancy would be more than \$420 million.
 - Health care savings from reduced tobacco-related heart attacks and strokes would be more than \$350 million.
 - Health care savings from reduced cases of lung cancer alone would be more \$200 million.

The Society strongly supported the 1997 legislation which increased the federal tobacco tax to help pay for SCHIP. ACS CAN and the Society believe it is a natural and essential step for this Congress to once again make good public health policy by increasing the tobacco tax to benefit children's health and positively impact smoking rates. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to ensure that this significant public health improvement measure becomes law.

Sincerely,

Daniel E. Smith
President

Wendy K. D. Selig
Vice President
Legislative Affairs