

# PROTECT KIDS AND SAVE LIVES

## INCREASE THE STATE CIGARETTE TAX BY \$2



## GET THE FACTS

### RAISING THE CIGARETTE TAX BY \$2 MAKES A BIG IMPACT

Increasing the price of tobacco products is one of the most effective ways to reduce youth use. Raising the tobacco tax in Washington by just \$2 would drive youth smoking down by 13.6 percent, encourage 20,900 Washingtonians to quit smoking and save 6,800 lives.



**Millions**  
in new projected state revenue



**5,700 kids in WA**  
would never become people who smoke



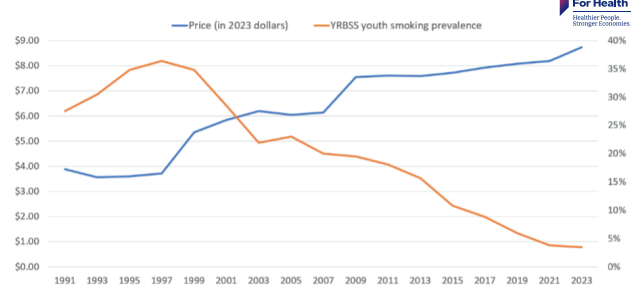
**20,900 people who smoke**  
over the age of 18 would quit



**6,800 lives in WA**  
would be saved

The tobacco industry targets their deadly products to Black Washingtonians through cheaper cigarette prices in predominantly Black neighborhoods and relentless marketing and promotion for menthol cigarettes.

### Youth smoking has decreased as the price of cigarettes has increased



**The communities targeted by Big Tobacco**  
have the most to gain by increasing the cigarette tax in Washington

The people the tobacco industry has historically targeted including youth and communities of color are particularly price-sensitive and are more likely to quit in response to a tax increase, providing them with relief from smoking-caused health and financial burdens

## SMOKING INFLECTS A TERRIBLE TOLL ON WASHINGTON'S ECONOMY



**YOUTH ARE ESPECIALLY PRICE-SENSITIVE, AND PRICE INCREASES COULD HELP REDUCE TOBACCO USE AMONG PEOPLE FROM ALL POPULATION GROUPS AT THE AGE WHEN THEY ARE MOST LIKELY TO BEGIN SMOKING.**



### The cost of a pack of cigarettes



**\$78.90**  
in health care costs and productivity losses



**\$3.025**  
current excise tax

Illness and premature death due to smoking lead to higher health care costs and productivity losses that amount to \$78.90 per pack in Washington. By contrast, the state only takes in \$3.025 per pack in excise tax revenue. Residents pay an additional \$791 per household in state and federal taxes for tobacco related costs. Reductions in smoking due to the tax increase will lower health care costs and productivity losses.



**16 years**  
since Washington has raised the cigarette tax



**\$791 per household**  
in state and federal taxes for tobacco related costs

Washington has not raised its cigarette tax in 16 years. During that time, 30 states raised their tax more than 50 different times, including neighboring Oregon, which raised its cigarette tax by \$2.00 per pack in 2021 and generated tens of millions of dollars in new revenue.

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# WASHINGTON'S TOBACCO PREVENTION PROGRAMS ARE SUCCESSFUL

## HELPING CURRENT PEOPLE WHO SMOKE TO QUIT AND PREVENTING YOUTH FROM STARTING TO SMOKE

Washington's tobacco prevention programs are successful in helping current people who smoke to quit and preventing youth from starting to smoke. In addition to state funds, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has historically provided critical resources for the state's tobacco prevention efforts. Given the recent drastic cuts to federal health programs, federal resources to support tobacco prevention efforts in Washington are at serious risk.

Nearly 70% of tobacco users want to quit. The Washington State Quitline offers free telephone counseling and tobacco cessation medication to people who smoke trying to quit. Since its inception, the state quitline has received over 300,000 calls. The federal government funds 59% of Washington's Quitline but due to cuts in federal funding, there will likely be significant cuts to quitline services and programming over the next year.



Washington's funding of tobacco prevention programs pales in comparison to the huge sums spent by tobacco companies to market their deadly and addictive products. Despite the tobacco industry spending more than \$80 million a year on marketing to hook Washingtonians, the state only spends \$3.8million annually on cessation services and youth tobacco prevention programs.

State spending on tobacco cessation and treatment is more important than ever given the devastating federal cuts to federal tobacco prevention programs.



# DON'T BE FOOLED BY BIG TOBACCO

## COMMON MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

### “Tobacco retailers will be put out of business”

- Despite declines in cigarette sales in the U.S., partially due to tax increases, the number of convenience stores, inside-store sales revenues, and store profits have all increased.
- Taxation of tobacco products is not correlated with a decline in the density of convenience stores, nor consumer spending.
- Other items, primarily food, generate higher profits for convenience stores than cigarettes.
- State restrictions on the sale of flavored e-cigarettes or menthol cigarettes DO NOT HAVE a significant effect on the number of convenience or tobacco stores, employment, or employee wages, since stores are successfully able to adapt to changes in market conditions.

### “It’s a regressive tax”

- The people the tobacco industry has historically targeted including youth and communities of color have the most health gains from an increase in the tobacco tax.
- Allocating some of the new tax revenues to cessation programs for individuals from lower socioeconomic groups will help more people to quit successfully and amplify the health and financial benefits from the tax increase.
- Tobacco tax increases significantly benefit the poor. When researchers evaluated the impact of the 2009 federal tobacco tax increase, they found the tax increase not only reduced smoking among young people but also reduced smoking rates - and therefore saving lives - more among those living below the poverty line compared to higher income groups.

### “People will just buy their cigarettes in other states to avoid paying the tax”

- State experiences show that every state that significantly increased its state cigarette tax has also boosted its state revenue, despite the reduction in pack sales from smoking declines from the tax increase or any related tax avoidance, tax evasion, or illicit activity, compared to its neighboring states without a tax increase.
- Researchers have determined that tobacco companies and their allies overstate the illicit trade problem. People may temporarily purchase across state lines, but will soon return to their normal routines to shop at local stores for convenience.

**Cigarette Tax Revenue Before and After Washington's Last Cigarette Tax Increase**

