

Impact of Tobacco in Oklahoma: The Need to Increase Tobacco Taxes to Reduce Healthcare Costs, Protect Kids, and Save Lives

Health & Economic Costs of Tobacco to Oklahoma

Tobacco is an addictive and deadly product. Smoking harms nearly every organ in the bodyⁱ and remains the number one cause of preventable death. In Oklahoma:

- 15.8% of adults smoke cigarettes.ⁱⁱ
- 23.4% of high school students use tobacco products including 4.3% who smoke cigarettes, 21.8% who use e-cigarettes, 6.2% who smoke cigars, and 3.8% who use smokeless tobacco.ⁱⁱⁱ
- 34.2% of cancer deaths are caused by smoking.^{iv}
- 89% of Oklahoma voters agree that tobacco use has a significant impact on the health of Oklahomans.^v
- Smoking is estimated to cost Oklahoma \$1.88 billion in direct health care costs, including \$283.8 million in Medicaid costs annually.^{vi}
- Smoking costs the state \$4.6 billion in productivity costs annually.^{vii}
- On average, Oklahoma residents pay \$1,113 per household in state and federal taxes from smoking-caused government expenditures, whether they smoke or not.^{viii}

Everyone Benefits from Tobacco Tax Increases

ACS CAN calls on Oklahoma lawmakers to increase the cigarette tax by \$1.50 per pack and tax all other tobacco products in parity with cigarettes to reduce health care costs, protect kids, and save lives. Regular and significant tobacco tax increases have a meaningful, measurable track record of success for states.

- **Save Lives:** Significant tobacco tax increases are one of the most effective ways to prevent kids from starting to use tobacco and help adults quit.^{ix,x} Increasing Oklahoma's cigarette tax by \$1.50 per pack would prevent 4,800 kids from becoming adults who smoke, help 13,500 adults who smoke quit, and save 4,700 lives.^{xi}
- **Save Money:** Substantial increases in cigarette tax rates not only save lives, but it also generates significant increases in new revenue.^{xii} In fact, every state that has significantly increased its cigarette tax has also boosted its state revenue.^{xiii} Additionally, significant tobacco tax increases reduce healthcare costs. Increasing Oklahoma's cigarette tax by \$1.50 per pack would generate \$111.39 million in new annual revenue for the state as well as provide \$243.65 million in long-term health care cost savings from adult and youth smoking declines.^{xiv}
- **Voters Approve:** 67% of Oklahoma voters support increasing the tax on cigarettes and all other tobacco products.^{xv}

Together we can create a cleaner, safer, healthier Oklahoma by significantly increasing tobacco taxes on all forms of commercial tobacco products.

ⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking. Updated April 28, 2020.

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/

ⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2023 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

<https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence/index.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/results.htm>

^{iv} Smoking-Related Cancer Deaths in 2020 Analysis by ACS, 2023.

^v A Survey of 600 Registered Voters in Oklahoma conducted December 11-15, 2023 by CHS & Associates.

^{vi} Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. The Toll of Tobacco in Oklahoma. Updated 08.16.24. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/oklahoma>

^{vii} Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. The Toll of Tobacco in Oklahoma. Updated 08.16.24. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/oklahoma>

^{viii} Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. The Toll of Tobacco in Oklahoma. Updated 08.16.24. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/oklahoma>

^{ix} U.S. National Cancer Institute and World Health Organization. The Economics of Tobacco and Tobacco Control. National Cancer Institute Tobacco Control Monograph 21. NIH Publication No. 16-CA-8029A. Bethesda, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute; and Geneva, CH: World Health Organization; 2016.

^x HHS, 2014.

^{xi} American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and Tobaccoomics. New Revenues, Public Health Benefits & Cost Savings from a \$1.50 Cigarette Tax Increase in Oklahoma. January 23, 2025.

^{xii} Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Raising State Cigarette Taxes Always Increases State Revenues (And Always Reduces Smoking). Updated December 27, 2023. Available at: <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0098.pdf>.

^{xiii} Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Raising State Cigarette Taxes Always Increases State Revenues (And Always Reduces Smoking). Updated December 27, 2023. <https://assets.tobaccofreekids.org/factsheets/0098.pdf>

^{xiv} American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, and Tobaccoomics. New Revenues, Public Health Benefits & Cost Savings from a \$1.50 Cigarette Tax Increase in Oklahoma. January 23, 2025.

^{xv} A Survey of 600 Registered Voters in Oklahoma conducted December 11-15, 2023 by CHS & Associates.