

How the South Carolina Legislature Strengthens Tobacco Control Efforts

ACS CAN applauds lawmakers for increasing funding, including for programs that help prevent kids from starting to use tobacco products.

July 16, 2024 By American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

The [South Carolina] legislature's final version of the state's two-year operating budget, which the governor signed [July 3], includes additional funding for programs that help prevent kids from starting to use tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and help those already addicted quit. These programs are critical because they implement fact-based strategies to reduce tobacco use, the number one cause of preventable death nationwide and are responsible for 32.1% of cancer deaths in South Carolina.

The following statement can be attributed to Beth Johnson, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network South Carolina government relations director:

"The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is encouraged that South Carolina state lawmakers have taken the urgent need for a significant investment in tobacco prevention and cessation seriously in our state given our state's tobacco use rates that are significantly higher than the national average for both youth and adults. State lawmakers prioritized the health of South Carolina citizens over Big Tobacco's interests with the addition of \$1 million to SmokeFreeSC, the state's tobacco prevention and control coalition. This is in addition to the ongoing dedication of \$5 million annually from the state's cigarette tax revenue that is given to the Department of Health, Tobacco Division.

"We know that fact-based programs, funded at adequate levels to reach youth and adults, are effective when it comes to reducing tobacco use. By allocating additional resources to programs to reduce tobacco use, our state is taking significant strides toward creating healthier communities, saving lives and reducing the number of people who will hear the words, 'You have cancer.'

"This additional investment in South Carolina's fact-based tobacco control program will help the state to counteract Big Tobacco's deceptive marketing strategies and work towards preventing another generation of people from becoming addicted to these deadly and

addictive products.”

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