

## INCREASING THE PRICE OF CIGARETTES: an investment in the health of Maine.

**A \$1.00 increase in Maine's cigarette tax would avoid 4800 smoking-related deaths and save \$238 million in lifetime health costs.**

- **Every year 1,700 Maine kids become daily smokers. Over one third of them will die prematurely as a result.** Over 2,400 Maine residents die each year from tobacco use – that's nearly 7 deaths PER DAY from smoking-related diseases.
- **Raising the price of cigarettes is a proven method to lower youth smoking rates and reduce overall consumption of cigarettes.** Every 10% increase in the price of cigarettes reduces youth smoking rates by as much as 6.5%. A 10% increase reduces adult consumption by about 4%. Tobacco pricing policies are an integral component of any comprehensive tobacco control program.
- **Raising the price of cigarettes significantly reduces the burden on the health care system because of its impact on smoking rates.** A tax increase of \$1.00 would lead to 16,400 fewer smokers in Maine. Every youth who doesn't start smoking saves the health care system about \$16,000 in lifetime health costs. Every adult who quits saves about \$8,500. A \$1.00 increase would save the health care system \$238.2 million dollars.
- **It would be necessary to tax cigarettes at \$11.61 per pack in order to pay for the smoking-caused costs Maine is experiencing each year as a result of past and current smoking.** Direct health costs from smoking are estimated to be \$602 million annually.
- **Using cigarette tax revenue to pay for health programs is a natural fit, given the costs that tobacco use imposes on the health care system.**
- **Mainers overwhelmingly support increasing cigarette taxes.** In a survey conducted in January 2005, 67% of respondents agreed that given the lives and health costs saved, Maine's tobacco tax should be increased by \$1.50 per pack.