



AARP Iowa Comments
“Comprehensive and Affordable Health Care for Families and Businesses Act”
Division XI: \$1 Tobacco Tax Increase
January 31, 2007

- **Pass no less than a \$1 increase in Iowa’s tobacco tax, and put the money towards health care.** A \$1 tobacco tax increase is concrete health care reform on its own.
- AARP surveys (and other polls) repeatedly show 70% of Iowans, including AARP members favor raising Iowa’s tobacco tax by \$1. The AARP surveys indicate that support runs strong across all parties: Democrats, Republicans, and No Parties.
- Medicaid is one of the most costly expenses for the state, yet the annual smoke-related budget deficits in Medicaid is a contributing factor to the annual scooping of funding from the Senior Living Trust Fund.
- In August 2006 at the Iowa State Fair, AARP Iowa collected nearly 8000 signed petitions from Iowans who support raising the tobacco tax by \$1. (*See page 2*)
- In February 2006, AARP Iowa sent a mailing to AARP members in 14 House legislative districts, including both party leaders (7 Democrats, 7 Republicans). AARP asked these members if they would be willing to put their name in a newspaper ad stating they support raising Iowa’s tobacco tax by \$1. AARP received 2,441 signatures from those members in 14 districts. (*See page 3 and 4 for two ads*)
- AARP Iowa asks the Iowa General Assembly to listen to Iowans who want a \$1 tobacco tax increase, not the tobacco industry who can handle a 64 cent increase.
Stop the buck at a buck!

(Testimony of one AARP member and volunteer, Leta Wall of Cedar Rapids, IA):

Leta Wall is one of the many Iowans who have witnessed the affects of smoking firsthand. Leta is an 86 year old former smoker, who feels fortunate she quit in her 40’s. Her husband was not so fortunate, as he died of smoking-related illness in 2005. In 2006, Leta’s 54 year old son, who does not smoke, was diagnosed with emphysema, a condition the doctor says is the result of secondhand smoke.

Nearly 8000 collected at Iowa State Fair 2006



Don't Let The Tobacco Tax Go Up In Smoke

Currently, Iowa's tax on tobacco is among the country's lowest at 36 cents a pack. Iowa has not raised the tobacco tax since 1991. Each year, 4,600 people die in Iowa due to tobacco-related illness.

Join Iowans who support raising the tobacco tax by \$1 to help reduce state smoking rates, reduce annual state health care spending on smoking-related illnesses and most of all – help fund health and long-term care programs that are essential to Iowa.



Make your voice heard by signing the agreement statement below to tell Iowa's candidates and elected officials that you join with AARP in urging the increased tax to improve the health of all Iowans.

Yes, I Support Increasing Iowa's Tobacco Tax by \$1

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip MARION, IA. 52302
Email (optional) _____

Stay Connected with AARP Iowa!

Yes, I would like to be part of AARP's Grassroots Network and receive periodic alerts and messages via email or postal mail about AARP activities and legislative issues.

by postal mail

by email

Please, Tell Me More About...

Driver Safety Classes in my area

Grassroots, Elections & Advocacy Team

Tax-Aide service in my area

Volunteer Opportunities with AARP

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DON'T LET THE TOBACCO TAX GO UP IN SMOKE.

**Join these local Iowans who support raising the tobacco tax
and contact Rep. Pat Murphy today.**

By increasing our state tobacco tax by \$1, Iowans will help reduce state smoking rates, reduce annual state health care spending on smoking-related illnesses and most of all — help fund health and long-term care programs that are essential to Iowa.



The power to make it better.™

Contact State Rep. Pat Murphy today at 515-281-3221 and urge him to support the tobacco tax. Or visit www.aarp.org/ia for more information.

Paid for by AARP Iowa, Bruce Koepl, AARP Iowa State Director.

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