FACT SHEET

Washington’s Tobacco Prevention and Control Program

Washington’s Tobacco Prevention and Control Plan is the state’s first comprehensive effort to protect children from tobacco and decrease the use of tobacco products. The plan is comprised of six key elements: community-based programs, school-based programs, cessation, public awareness and education, youth access restriction, and assessment and evaluation.

There is considerable evidence that public education efforts, community and school-based programs, smoking cessation programs, and strict enforcement of laws that restrict youth access to tobacco products can each significantly reduce tobacco use.\(^1\) Research and experience also show that these individual elements are most effective when they are integrated into a comprehensive program.\(^2\) Just one year after the initiation of Minnesota’s comprehensive tobacco prevention program, tobacco use declined 25% among teens aged 12-17.\(^3\) Less than two years after the initiation of Florida’s comprehensive tobacco program targeted at youth, smoking was reduced by 40% among middle school students and 18% among high school students.\(^4\)

**History:** In November 1998, 46 states and 5 territories came to a $195 billion agreement to settle outstanding lawsuits against the tobacco industry. For its part, Washington state received $323 million in the 1999-2001 biennium and is slated to receive approximately $4 billion through 2025.\(^5\)

The 1999 Washington legislature dedicated $100 million of the settlement funds for tobacco prevention.\(^6\) As a result, the Department of Health appointed a council to recommend the most effective tobacco prevention and control measures. With these recommendations in hand, the Department of Health developed the Tobacco Prevention and Control Plan (TPCP), with a request for $26.2 million for fiscal year 2001. The 1999 report estimated that this level of funding could prevent 84,000 deaths and save more than $3 billion in medical costs over 10 years.\(^7\)

The 1999 report, based on the successful strategies of other states, recommended the following:

- $7.6 million for community-based tobacco prevention programs, e.g., multicultural outreach, Youth Advisory Board, partnership grants, and a materials clearinghouse;
- $4.8 million for school programs, e.g., a comprehensive K-12 program;
- $2.0 million for cessation, e.g., youth and adult toll-free Quit Lines and nicotine replacements for the uninsured;
- $8.6 million for public awareness and education, e.g., mass media campaign;
- $140,000 for youth access restriction, e.g., retailer education, enforcement of state and federal laws;
- $2.2 million for assessment and evaluation; and
- $777,000 for administrative costs.

**Current Status:** In 2000, legislators reviewed the plan and appropriated $15 million for fiscal year 2001, only 60% of the original request for the first year of the program.\(^8\) This smaller amount necessitated that some activities were eliminated or reduced in the program’s first year. These cuts included:

- school programs for grades K-4 and 10-12;
- media campaigns targeting pregnant women, new parents, and young adults;
- Youth Quit Line;
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- programs to reach underserved populations; and
- the statewide youth board.

The Tobacco Prevention & Control Program was launched in its reduced form in July 2001. The legislature has appropriated $35 million for the 2001-2003 biennium ($17.2 million in fiscal year 2002). Indentification 773—Fully Funding the TPCP: I-773 proposes a $0.60 increase in the state cigarette tax. The initiative mandates that the legislature fully fund the Tobacco Prevention and Control Program as originally proposed and that the increased tax revenues augment but not replace the current funding stream.

3 Market Solutions, Telephone survey of 1,104 youth aged 12-17 for Target Market, project of the Minnesota Youth Tobacco Prevention Initiative, August 29, 2001 (http://www.tmvoice.com/).
6 The remaining settlement money is dedicated to the Health Services Account.
9 Washington State Senate Ways and Means Committee, “2001-03 Operating and Capital Budget Highlights”, June 21, 2001 (http://leap.leg.wa.gov/FinalBudget2001.htm) Fiscal Year 2002 funds are appropriated as follows: Media $6.6 million, Community $4.5 million, Schools $2.5 million, Cessation $1.4 million, Assessment $1.3 million, Administration $0.9 million.