

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 9, 2009**  
**CONTACT: Joel Spivak/Ashley Rockhold, 202-296-5469**

**National Report: Pennsylvania Drops from 26<sup>th</sup> to 34<sup>th</sup> in Funding Programs  
To Protect Kids from Tobacco**  
*State Urged to Reverse 45% Cut to Tobacco Prevention Programs*

**Washington, DC (December 9, 2009)** – Pennsylvania has cut state funding for tobacco prevention programs by 45 percent in the past year, dropping from 26<sup>th</sup> to 34<sup>th</sup> in the nation in funding programs to prevent kids from smoking and help smokers quit, according to a national report released today by a coalition of public health organizations.

Pennsylvania currently spends \$19.0 million a year on tobacco prevention and cessation programs, including \$17.7 million in state funds and the rest from a federal grant. This total is just 12.2 percent of the \$155.5 million recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Last year, Pennsylvania ranked 26<sup>th</sup>, spending \$33.2 million on tobacco prevention.

Other key findings for Pennsylvania include:

- In the past year, Pennsylvania has cut state funding for its tobacco prevention program by 45 percent, from \$32.1 million to \$17.7 million. This is one of the largest cuts of any state.
- Pennsylvania this year will collect \$1.43 billion from the 1998 tobacco settlement and tobacco taxes, but will spend just 1.3 percent of it on tobacco prevention programs.
- The tobacco companies spend \$533.9 million a year to market their products in Pennsylvania. This is 28 times what the state spends on tobacco prevention.

The annual report on states' funding of tobacco prevention programs, titled "A Broken Promise to Our Children: The 1998 State Tobacco Settlement 11 Years Later," was released by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, American Heart Association, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Lung Association and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

"Pennsylvania has taken a big step backward this year and is one of the most disappointing states when it comes to funding programs to protect kids from tobacco," said Matthew L. Myers, President of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. "Pennsylvania's leaders need to step up the fight against tobacco by increasing the tobacco tax and restoring funding for tobacco prevention. Even in these difficult budget times, tobacco prevention is a smart investment that reduces smoking, saves lives and saves money by reducing tobacco-related health care costs."

In Pennsylvania, 17.5 percent of high school students smoke, and 16,100 more kids become regular smokers every year. Each year, tobacco claims 20,000 lives and costs the state \$5.2 billion in health care bills.

Eleven years after the 1998 state tobacco settlement, the new report finds that the states this year are collecting record amounts of revenue from the tobacco industry, but are spending less of it on tobacco prevention. Key national findings of the report include:

- The states this year will collect \$25.1 billion from the tobacco settlement and tobacco taxes, but will spend just 2.3 percent of it – \$567.5 million – on tobacco prevention programs. It would take less than 15 percent of their tobacco revenue to fund tobacco prevention programs in every state at CDC-recommended levels.

- In the past year, states have cut funding for tobacco prevention programs by more than 15 percent, or \$103.4 million.
- Only one state – North Dakota – currently funds a tobacco prevention program at the CDC-recommended level.
- Only nine other states fund prevention programs at even half the CDC-recommended amount, while 31 states and DC are providing less than a quarter of the recommended funding.

The report warns that the nation's progress in reducing smoking is at risk unless states increase funding for programs to prevent kids from smoking and help smokers quit. The United States has significantly reduced smoking among both youth and adults, but the CDC's most recent survey showed that smoking declines among adults have stalled. Currently 20 percent of high school students and 20.6 percent of adults smoke.

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the U.S., killing more than 400,000 people and costing \$96 billion in health care bills each year. Every day, another 1,000 kids become regular smokers – one-third of them will die prematurely as a result.

More information, including the full report and state-specific information, can be obtained at [www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/settlements](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/settlements).