

# Tobacco Tax Increase

## ***Why are we concerned about tobacco and taxes?***

Cigarette smoking is responsible for more than 480,000 deaths per year in the United States, including more than 41,000 deaths resulting from secondhand smoke exposure. This is about one in five deaths annually, or 1,300 deaths every day. On average, smokers die 10 years earlier than nonsmokers.



## ***What is a “Tobacco Tax?”***

It's an excise tax on the sale of cigarettes and roll-your-own tobacco. A Virginia law has been put in place that allows county governments to impose a local tax on cigarettes. Tobacco taxes are an important tool to prevent youth from using tobacco products and to encourage adults to quit.

## ***Why is Tobacco Tax important to public health and BRHD?***

In the last legislative session, the Virginia State legislature authorized all localities to charge a tobacco tax no higher than the state tax of \$1.00. In our district, the City of Charlottesville's tobacco tax is .55¢ and the counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, and Nelson can now choose to increase their taxes to the state rate.

## ***How can communities use tobacco taxes to reinvest in communities?***

- Provide funding for much-needed health programs
- Tobacco prevention and cessation programs
- Youth smoking prevention programs
- Provide support for disparities caused by smoking
- Industry tactics and tobacco control policies.

In Oregon, a study found that the combination of a tax increase and the state's tobacco prevention and education program decreased taxable per capita cigarette consumption by 11%.

***For more information visit:*** [www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/us/state-tobacco-taxes](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/us/state-tobacco-taxes)



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