



Ohio Senate Finance Committee

May 25, 2023

Proponent Testimony – HB 33, Operating Budget  
Leo Almeida, Ohio Government Relations Director  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee, I am Leo Almeida, Ohio Government Relations Director for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN). Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB 33, the biennial budget, which we believe can help address Ohio's cancer burden.

ACS CAN is the nonprofit, non-partisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society. We advocate for public policies to end cancer as we know it, for everyone, including policies targeted at improving the health of our state by reducing tobacco use. ACS CAN supports the Governor's proposed budget, which would increase funding for tobacco control programs by \$5.5 million over the biennium. We also support the continued funding for the Ohio Breast and Cervical Cancer Project at \$1.1 million in FY24 and \$1.2 million in FY25.

### **Tobacco Control Funding**

Tobacco is an addictive and deadly product and tobacco use remains the nation's number one cause of preventable death. Smoking harms nearly every organ in the body and increases the risk for many types of cancer, heart attack, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema, chronic bronchitis and other diseases.<sup>i</sup> Smoking is the single largest contributing risk factor to cancer in the United States, increasing the risk of at least 12 cancers.<sup>ii</sup> In fact, smoking is responsible for an estimated 33.8% of cancer deaths in Ohio.<sup>iii</sup> It is estimated that 20,200 Ohio adults die from smoking every year.<sup>iv</sup> It is the single largest preventable cause of death.

It should be noted that the damage tobacco inflicts upon our state is not limited to death and disease. Smoking is estimated to cost Ohio \$6.56 billion in direct health care costs, including \$1.85 billion in Medicaid costs annually.<sup>v</sup> These amounts do not include health costs caused by exposure to secondhand smoke, smoking-caused fires, smokeless tobacco use, or cigar and pipe smoking. Additionally, smoking costs the state \$14.4 billion in productivity costs annually. Tobacco use also imposes additional costs such as workplace productivity losses and damage to property. These costs far outpace the \$1.2 billion in annual tobacco revenue the state receives from tobacco settlement payments and tobacco taxes. On average Ohio residents pay \$1,186 per household in state and federal taxes from smoking-caused government expenditures, whether they smoke or not. It is vital that fact-based programs are in place to reduce tobacco use and reduce taxpayer-funded health care costs.

Due to skyrocketing rates of youth tobacco use in recent years, the decades of progress that has been made in reducing tobacco use rates in youth is now in jeopardy. Here in Ohio 36.7% of high school students use tobacco products, including 4.9% who smoke cigarettes, 7.2% who smoke cigars, 9.9% who use smokeless tobacco, and 29.8% who use electronic cigarettes.<sup>vi</sup> Action is needed to reverse these trends. In fact, if nothing is done to reduce smoking rates in our state, 259,000 kids under 18 currently alive in Ohio will ultimately die prematurely from smoking.<sup>vii</sup>

According to projections developed by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, increasing tobacco control funding by \$5.5 million annually would mean 1,300 fewer Ohio kids growing up to be adults who smoke and decrease future healthcare expenditures by \$20.8 million.

Ohio's comprehensive tobacco control program is currently funded at \$14.5 million annually, which is only 11% of the \$132 million the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that Ohio spend to combat the health and economic consequences of tobacco. The Governor proposed increasing current tobacco funding by \$5.5 million annually. Unfortunately, the Ohio House of Representatives decreased the Governor's proposal to only \$500,000 in HB 33. ACS CAN urges the Ohio Senate to restore the Governor's proposal to increase overall funding to \$20 million annually for tobacco prevention and cessation programs to reduce taxpayer costs, protect kids, and save lives.

### **Breast & Cervical Cancer**

The Ohio Breast & Cervical Cancer Project (BCCP) is a critical safety net program that provides free mammograms, cervical exams and other prevention services to approximately 7,000 low-income Ohioans each year. Some qualified women who are diagnosed with cancer through the program are then navigated to special Medicaid coverage, called the Medicaid Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Program, for the duration of their treatment.

Breast cancer is the leading cancer for women in Ohio. The American Cancer Society estimates that 11,200 Ohio women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year and 510 Ohio women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer.<sup>viii</sup> Early detection is key to increasing an individual's chance of surviving cancer. Approximately 67% of women 45 years and older in Ohio are up-to-date on their mammography screenings.<sup>ix</sup> Unfortunately, being uninsured or underinsured can make it difficult to keep up with cancer screenings. For these reasons, screening services offered through the BCCP will be a critical resource for thousands of Ohioans. We urge you to continue funding for Ohio BCCP at \$1.1 million in FY24 and \$1.2 million in FY25.

Ohio's biennial budget provides an important opportunity for the fight against cancer. Increasing funding for tobacco prevention by \$5.5 million per year and maintaining funding for the Ohio Breast and Cervical Cancer Project of at least \$1.1 million per year will ensure we prevent more Ohioans from hearing the words "you have cancer."

Thank you for your consideration of these important budget items in HB 33. I'm happy to answer any questions you might have.

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<sup>i</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking. Updated October 29, 2021.

[https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/health\\_effects/effects\\_cig\\_smoking/](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/)

<sup>ii</sup> American Cancer Society. [Cancer Facts and Figures 2023](#). Atlanta, Georgia. 2023.

<sup>iii</sup> Islami, F, Marlow, EC, Zhao, J, et al. Person-years of life lost and lost earnings from cigarette smoking-attributable cancer deaths, United States, 2019. *Int J Cancer*. 2022; 151( 12): 2095- 2106. doi:[10.1002/ijc.34217](https://doi.org/10.1002/ijc.34217)

<sup>iv</sup> Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. The Toll of Tobacco in Ohio. February 17, 2023. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/ohio>

<sup>v</sup> Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. The Toll of Tobacco in Ohio. February 17, 2023. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/ohio>

<sup>vi</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/results.htm>

<sup>vii</sup> Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. The Toll of Tobacco in Ohio. February 17, 2023. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/ohio>

<sup>viii</sup> American Cancer Society. [Cancer Facts and Figures 2023](#). Atlanta, Georgia. 2023.

<sup>ix</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Statistics Center. January 2023. <https://cancerstatisticscenter.cancer.org/#/state/Ohio>