



TO: House Finance Sub-Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Ken Fletcher, Director of Advocacy

DATE: March 4, 2021

RE: HB 110- Tobacco Cessation Funding in FY2022-23 Appropriation

Chairman Roemer, Vice Chair Lipps, Ranking Minority Member West, and members of the House Finance HHS Subcommittee, I am Ken Fletcher, Director of Advocacy for Ohio and I thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the American Lung Association regarding HB 110 - the state appropriation for FY 2022-23.

The American Lung Association is the oldest voluntary public health organization in the United States and is committed to eliminating tobacco use and tobacco-related disease. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States, killing nearly half a million Americans each year.

The American Lung Association strongly supports funding state tobacco prevention and cessation programs at levels recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Sustained investment in these vital public health programs over the long term will prevent thousands of illnesses and deaths from tobacco use and save billions of dollars in medical expenses.

Why Fully Funding Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Programs is Important:

- Tobacco prevention and cessation programs are very cost effective. A 2013 study found that California's tobacco control program saved over \$55 in health care cost savings for every \$1 invested from 1989 to 2008. A 2011 study showed that Washington's program saved the state \$5 in just tobacco-related hospitalization costs for every \$1 spent from 2000 to 2009.
- Fewer young people would smoke. One study concluded that if states spent just the minimum amount recommended by the CDC, youth smoking rates would be 3 percent to 14 percent lower nationwide.
- Fewer adults would smoke. A study concluded that if states had spent just the minimum amount recommended by the CDC between 1995 and 2003, there would have been between 2.2 million and 7.1 million fewer smokers.

Ohio currently spends only 11.1% of what is recommended by the CDC. That's why the American Lung Association strongly supports the governor's proposed increase in the **Tobacco Use Prevention Fund line** item by \$2.5 million in each fiscal year. This program works to lower the smoking rate in Ohio, which remains significantly higher than the national average. The proposed funding level of \$14.5 million in each fiscal year would amount to a 20.8% increase in funding for tobacco use prevention.

The Lung Association also supports the budget provision that adds vapor products to the Smoke-Free Workplace Act, which prohibits smoking in public places and places of employment in Ohio. The proposed budget adds “the use of electronic smoking device and vapor product” to the prohibitions. The Lung Association supports this addition and asks the legislature to retain the addition of vapor products

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the FY 2022-23 Budget. The American Lung Association in Ohio looks forward to working with the legislature as HB 110 continues to move through the process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kenneth Fletcher".

Kenneth Fletcher,
Director of Advocacy
American Lung Association in Ohio
Ken.fletcher@lung.org
248-220-5213