

**RESOLUTION
of the
WINNEBAGO COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
SUPPORT FOR TOBACCO TAX**

WHEREAS, smoking is a leading contributing factor to the major causes of death in Winnebago County and nationally, from heart disease, cancer, stroke, and chronic lower respiratory disease, and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois Medicaid program faces increasing health care costs in a time when Illinois has insufficient revenue to cover costs, and

WHEREAS, Medicaid funds match federal dollars and for every one dollar Illinois spends on Medicaid it brings in an additional dollar in federal funding, and

WHEREAS, overall health care costs attributed to smoking in Illinois are \$4.9 billion each year and the cost to Illinois Medicaid programming is \$1.8 billion each year, and

WHEREAS, a \$1 tax increase per pack of cigarettes would result in a \$50 million savings in Medicaid in the first full year of its enactment, and

WHEREAS, Illinois has not increased its tobacco tax in ten years and

WHEREAS, there have been 92 statewide tobacco tax increases across the nation in the past ten years to help offset budget shortfalls, meaning individual states have passed tobacco tax increases multiple times, and

WHEREAS, studies show that increases in the price of tobacco products have a positive public health impact. It is estimated that raising the tobacco tax by \$1 per pack of cigarettes will prevent 77,600 adolescent and young adult(s) from beginning use of tobacco and another 59,000 Illinois smokers will quit and 59,200 current Illinois residents will be saved from premature deaths caused by smoking.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Winnebago County Board of Health and its members support the State of Illinois's strategy of balancing the Illinois Medicaid program budget by increasing revenue \$1 per pack of cigarettes to offset cuts to the Medicaid program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this proposed tobacco tax increase combines smart fiscal and public health policy that will not only reduce the burden on Illinois's Medicaid program, but will also save lives, improve health, and prevent youth from initiating tobacco use.

The above and foregoing Resolution was adopted by Winnebago County Board of Health this day of 15th day of May, 2012.

Inara McGroarty
Inara McGroarty, President
Winnebago County Board of Health

ATTEST:
James Powers
James Powers, Secretary
Winnebago County Board of Health