

STOP PROP 94

Protect Our Children from The Tobacco Industry



Florida Constitutional Revision Commission Proposal 94 – Talking Points

The History of the Tobacco Free Florida Program

- The funds for the Tobacco Free Florida program are not tax dollars. The money comes from the settlement of a lawsuit between Florida and the major tobacco companies to help reduce the monetary costs to the state for tobacco use.
- In 2006, Floridians overwhelmingly voted for an amendment to the Florida Constitution (Article X, Section 27) to guarantee that funds from the tobacco settlement are used for a youth tobacco prevention and cessation program. Prior to passage of this amendment, the Florida legislature had essentially de-funded these programs.
- The Article X, Section 27 of the Florida Constitution mandates that the Tobacco Free Florida Program follow evidence-based Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention's *Best Practices for a Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs*.

The Effectiveness of the Tobacco Free Florida Program

- The Tobacco Free Florida Program undergoes rigorous outside evaluation to make sure the programs comply with the CDC *Best Practices*.
- Currently, the Tobacco Free Florida Program spends one-third of the funds on youth prevention programs, one-third of the funds on tobacco cessation efforts, and one-third of the funds on hard-hitting media campaigns that support both the youth prevention and tobacco cessation.
- Since full funding of the program was restored by the voters, the adult smoking rate in Florida has fallen from 21% to 15.8%, the lowest it has ever been.
- Since full funding of the program was restored by the voters, the smoking rate among high school students has fallen from 15.5% to 5.2%, the lowest it has ever been.
- Since full funding of the program was restored by the voters, there has been a cumulative savings of \$17.7 Billion for smoking-related health care costs in Florida, including \$3.2 Billion in 2015.

The Impact of Proposal 94

- Florida CRC Proposal 94 looks to add *cancer research* to the list of items funded by the Tobacco Free Florida program; cancer research is NOT listed as one of the CDC's *Best Practices for a Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs*.

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- Proposal 94 would give the legislature the authority to determine the percentage of funds spent on youth prevention, tobacco cessation, media campaigns, and cancer research. In theory, all the funds could be earmarked for cancer research at the expense of the effective prevention and cessation programs.
- Proposal 94 is fiscally irresponsible; [analysis of Proposal 94](#) provided to the Florida CRC revealed that a 20% shift in funds from the current Tobacco Free Florida Program into cancer research (\$14.3 million in FY 2019-20), would equate to \$1.9-21.4 Billion in personal health care costs over the next decade, including increased Medicaid costs to taxpayers of \$0.5-4.5 Billion.

Reasons Proposal 94 is Unnecessary

- In 2008, the Florida Legislature increased the cigarette tax to \$1.34 per pack; the cigarette tax currently generates \$1.3 Billion annually.
- The Florida legislature has two cancer research programs (Bankhead-Coley Cancer Research Program, James & Esther King Biomedical Research Program), that are funded by the Florida Legislature.
- In 2008, the Florida Legislature promised to spend 5% of the new revenue generated by the cigarette tax on these two cancer research programs (roughly \$50 Million), however, the legislature has drastically cut the funding for these two programs over the last 7-8 years.
- There is no need to change the Florida Constitution to raid the Tobacco Free Florida Program to fund cancer research, because there is a legislative solution: simply restore the portion of the cigarette tax that was originally supposed to fund the Bankhead-Coley and James & Esther King research programs.