



State Cigarette Taxes

Increasing taxes on cigarettes is a winning solution for states. Higher taxes deter children from starting to smoke and motivate adults to quit. These taxes also raise revenue that can and should be used to fund tobacco prevention and cessation programs. Forty-seven states, and the District of Columbia have raised their cigarette taxes since January 1, 2002, many of them more than once. See the map below for each state's cigarette tax rate as of March 1, 2013.

Action/Key Facts on Cigarette Taxes:

- In 2012, two states – Illinois and Rhode Island – approved legislation increasing their cigarette taxes.
- The nationwide average state cigarette tax currently stands at \$1.49 per pack.
- New York has the highest cigarette tax in the country at \$4.35 per pack, while Missouri has the lowest at \$0.17 per pack.
- New York is the only state with a cigarette tax rate at or over \$4.00 per pack; Connecticut, Hawaii, Rhode Island and Washington have tax rates at or over \$3.00 per pack.

Why Increasing Tobacco Taxes Are Important for Public Health:

- Studies have shown that a 10 percent increase in the price of cigarettes reduces consumption by about 7 percent for youth and 4 percent for adults.¹
- A 2007 report released by the prestigious Institute of Medicine entitled *Ending the Tobacco Problem: A Blueprint for the Nation* recommended increasing taxes as an effective tool to reduce tobacco use. Specific recommendations included increasing cigarette taxes to at least \$2.00 per pack, and indexing cigarette taxes to inflation.²
- An independent panel of scientists convened by the National Institutes of Health examined the evidence behind a number of interventions to reduce tobacco use in 2006, and concluded that increases in the price of tobacco products prevent tobacco use among adolescents and young adults, increases tobacco use cessation and reduces consumption of tobacco products by adults.³
- A 2002 study in the journal *Tobacco Control* examined tobacco industry documents related to cigarette tax increases, and found that the industry was well aware of the potent effect that increases in price have on reducing both youth and adult consumption of cigarettes.⁴



For more information on state cigarette taxes, check out the American Lung Association’s State Legislated Actions on Tobacco Issues (SLATI), available online at <http://slati.lung.org>.

Last updated: March 1, 2013; updated as information changes or annually.

¹ Tauras JA, O’Malley PM, Johnston LD, “Effects of Price and Access Laws on Teenage Smoking Initiation: A National Longitudinal Analysis,” Bridging the Gap Research, ImpacTeen, April 2001. Available at: http://www.impactteen.org/generalarea_PDFs/AccessLaws.pdf.

² IOM (Institute of Medicine). 2007. *Ending the tobacco problem: A blueprint for the nation*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

³ National Institutes of Health State-of-the-Science conference statement: tobacco use: prevention, cessation, and control. *Ann Intern Med*. 2006 Dec 5; 145(11):839-44. Statement available online at: <http://www.annals.org/cgi/content/full/0000605-200612050-00141v1>.

⁴ Chaloupka FJ, Cummings KM, Marley CP, Horan JK. Tax, price and cigarette smoking: evidence from the tobacco documents and implications for tobacco company marketing strategies. *Tob Control*. 2002 Mar; 11 (Suppl 1): 162-72.