



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

Testimony of

Anne Foley, Chair

Tobacco and Health Trust Fund Board of Trustees

To the Joint Committees on Public Health and Appropriations

January 29, 2014

Regarding Recommendations for Disbursement

From the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund

Good Morning Senator Gerratana, Senator Bye, Representative Johnson, Representative Walker, and distinguished members of the Public Health and Appropriations Committees. I am Anne Foley, the Chair of the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund Board of Trustees. On behalf of the Tobacco Board, I am here to ask for your support of the board's recommendations for disbursement as provided in our 2013 report. As required by statute, the report contains: 1) the board's 2013 activities and accomplishments; 2) a summary of all disbursements and other expenditures from the trust fund; and 3) recommendations for authorization of disbursement from the trust fund.

As you know, Public Act 99-2 (JSS) established a Tobacco and Health Trust Fund. The Trust Fund is a separate non-lapsing fund that accepts transfers from the Tobacco Settlement Fund. The Board of Trustees was established by Public Act 00-216 to administer the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund. The board has been before the committees of cognizance to seek approval for disbursement of trust funds on seven previous occasions and disbursements as a result of our board recommendations have totaled \$21.5 million.

In November 2012, the board received the committee's approval to disburse \$6 million; including \$2 million for anti-tobacco media campaigns, \$1.9 million for smoking cessations programs, \$1.6 million for QuitLine, and \$486,000 for evaluation.

In developing our new recommendations for disbursement, the Board began by convening a hearing in May 2013 to receive public input. At board meetings during the summer and fall, the board reviewed statutory mandates, guiding principles, past disbursements, and recommendations from various organizations and individuals. The Board's analysis and deliberations have resulted in the proposal you have before you today.

Under current law, the Board is able to recommend disbursement of up to \$3 million for the fiscal years 2014 and 2015. The FY 2014 disbursement proposal of the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund Board before you today has six major components totaling \$3 million. They are:

First, for **QuitLine**. The Board recommends disbursement of **\$1,611,984** be disbursed to support Connecticut's QuitLine. These funds will allow the QuitLine to maintain a comprehensive, proactive, statewide toll-free tobacco cessation telephone counseling and web service available to all of the State's residents from August 2014 to approximately May 2015. Tobacco users who call the helpline receive an assessment of their readiness to quit, a customized quit plan, problem solving advice, cessation material, referral services to one-on-one counseling or referral to local programs, and relapse prevention assistance. Nicotine replacement therapy will also be available to callers with this funding. In 2012, the QuitLine reached a new high with over 11,187 registrants, as compared with 7,154 in 2011. QuitLine's lack of other funding sources, the counter marketing campaign currently in operation, and the new Medicaid Rewards to Quit program make this support of QuitLine especially important in the coming year.

Second, to continue **the second year of a two-year smoking cessation program at the Department of Correction (DOC)**. The board recommends **\$527,283** be disbursed to fund a second year of the Department of Correction's smoking cessation and relapse prevention program. The program will continue to provide smoking cessation, education and relapse prevention services to inmates in identified, high-risk correctional facilities including, Manson Youth Institution (MYI), York Correctional Institution (YCI), New Haven Correctional Center (NCC) and Hartford Correctional Center (HCC). Based on the results of a study (conducted by UConn School of Social Work) on the prevalence of smokers in these four facilities, results showed that the prevalence was about 70%, approximately four times the prevalence rate in the general population in Connecticut. YCI and MYI had the highest prevalence rate of all four facilities at 84% and 81%, respectively. The Department of Correction will testify later this morning regarding the specifics of the initiative.

Third, to enhance **enforcement regarding sales of tobacco to children and youth** through the Tobacco Retailer Violation Program. The Board recommends **\$287,770** be disbursed to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to administer a Community Enforcement Pilot to prevent the sale of tobacco products to minors. Currently, the rate at which merchants sell tobacco to minors is 14.8%, up from 9.7% in 2009. Thirty eight states ranked better than Connecticut, with the lowest retailer violation rate at 1.8%. These funds will allow for an independent tobacco inspection program in high retailer violation rate areas in Connecticut, including, but not limited to, Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, Danbury and Waterbury. Contracted police departments or local social service agencies working in conjunction with law enforcement will receive training and guidance on how to conduct, track and report random, unannounced inspections of tobacco merchants to assess the rate of tobacco sales to minors. Funding will allow for inspections in these high retailer violation rate areas four times a year at 100% of the retail outlets. DMHAS will collect and analyze the data and identify problem areas for more in-depth merchant education. This funding will decrease access to and availability of tobacco products for Connecticut's children and youth.

And finally, a package of three initiatives to prevent children and youth from smoking. These initiatives are:

- **Statewide Tobacco Education Program (STEP).** The Board recommends **\$229,384** be disbursed to the state's Regional Action Councils to support tobacco education programs throughout the state. Over a two year period, it is estimated that 3,000 children ages 5-9 will participate in five one-hour sessions which are designed to be implemented in a variety of settings including summer camps, positive youth development programs, and traditional classroom locations. Previous evaluation of the STEP curriculum shows favorable outcomes after youth participated in these sessions. The sessions include: health information regarding tobacco, costs and choices, and dealing with peer pressure.
- **Smoking Prevention Connecticut Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs.** The Board recommends **\$179,579** be disbursed to the Connecticut Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs for a tobacco resistance and awareness program for club members ages 13-15. The program will be implemented by 16 clubs that serve members in 39 towns and cities in all regions of the state. The program will focus on Stay SMART (Skills, Mastery and Resistance Training) programming, which provides the knowledge, skills, self-esteem and peer support to help members make

healthy choices. Members will practice responsible behaviors to avoid using tobacco, alcohol and other drugs utilizing small group discussions, role playing, and guest speakers to emphasize the message. Research shows that youth who attended a structured Club program that included SMART Kids prevention programming had better refusal skills, problem solving, and ethical behaviors two years post programming compared to youth who participated in traditional club programs.

- **Teen Kids News.** The Board recommends that **\$164,000** be disbursed to support Teen Kids News (TKN), a weekly 30 minute Federal Communications Commission (FCC) approved children's news show. The funding will be used to produce a series of 12 science-based anti-smoking reports targeted to youth. The series of reports will be between one and two minute segments that will be aired on Teen Kids News once a month. The segments will be prepared and reported by youth. According to the Surgeon General, evidence indicates that mass media campaigns can be one of the most effective strategies in changing social norms and preventing youth smoking.

In summary, this proposal represents an opportunity for Connecticut to continue its progress toward achieving long term reductions in tobacco use and tobacco-related illnesses and deaths. We believe our past efforts have contributed to the decline in smoking among both adults and youth in Connecticut over the past twelve years.

Thank you for your consideration and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.