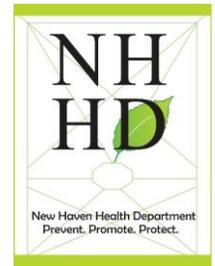




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Testimony Appropriations Committee
Brooke Logan, Health Programs Director, New Haven Health Department
9 March 2015

S.B. No. 946 AN ACT CONCERNING REVENUE ITEMS TO IMPLEMENT THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET.

Senator Fonfara, Representative Berger, and distinguished members of the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee, thank you for giving me this opportunity. My name is Brooke Logan and I am the Health Programs Director for the City of New Haven Health Department. The City of New Haven is opposed to the elimination of the annual \$12 million transfer from the Master Tobacco Settlement of the CT Tobacco and Health Trust Fund.

Funding for tobacco programs is critical for public health. While I recognize that Connecticut is experiencing difficult financial times, continuing to fund the CT Tobacco and Health Trust Fund is one of the wisest investments we can make in the state. Tobacco-related diseases cause almost 4,900 lives annually and over \$2 billion in health care costs (Our state Medicaid Program spends approximately \$500M in health care costs related to tobacco). This is a case when public health program dollars really can make a difference. When other states around the country have made the investment consistently overtime, they've seen a real return on their investments.

Connecticut receives significant revenue in the state from Tobacco Related Revenue, much of which is intended to help the state deal with the devastating impact tobacco causes to the state's economic and public health. If cuts are made to the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund, it will be the 63rd and 64th time the fund has received cuts in 17 years. Connecticut takes in over \$500 million in tobacco related revenue every year. Why we wouldn't spend this money to help smokers quit and to prevent another generation from succumbing to this deadly and costly product is incomprehensible. Almost 70% of smokers want to quit. We owe it to them to offer resources to help them do so. The Tobacco Health Trust Fund is the sole funding source for our state's QuitLine.

We still have a lot of work ahead of us in the fight against big tobacco is over. While we see cuts to the state's tobacco prevention and cessation programming, the tobacco industry will spend \$78 million in marketing and advertising in Connecticut this year and 4,300 people, mostly kids, will begin the habit. The industry continues to create more and more unregulated tobacco products with claims of harm reduction. The truth is, we do not know what is in these products and are not putting the resources towards better educating our youth and general public about these new and emerging products.

I call on all of you to restore these cuts to ensure that funding for the Tobacco Health Trust Fund is not eliminated.

Thank you for your time.

Brooke Logan, MPH
Health Programs Director