

April 26, 2017



Senator Michelle R. Benson, Chair
Senator Jim Abeler
Senator Karin Housley
Senator Tony Lourey
Senator Paul J. Utke

Representative Matt Dean, Chair
Representative Tony Albright
Representative Debra Kiel
Representative Joe Schomacker
Representative Jennifer Schultz

RE: Omnibus HHS Bill (SF 800 / HF 945)
Tobacco Cessation Quitline

Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation is a coalition of more than 50 organizations with a common goal of saving Minnesota youth from a lifetime of addiction to tobacco. We were pleased to see the House's 2017 Health and Human Services Omnibus Bill contains funding for a tobacco cessation quitline (HF2150 – Anselmo). We urge you to include funding for a tobacco quitline in your final bill.

Helping people quit smoking is one of the most cost-effective health services. And, a state-run tobacco quitline is crucial to address tobacco-related health disparities in Minnesota. Currently, Minnesotans have access to quit-smoking support through QUITPLAN® Services, a program provided by the statewide nonprofit ClearWay MinnesotaSM (a member and co-chair of this coalition). ClearWay Minnesota is a life-limited organization and QUITPLAN Services will end in 2020. It is essential that when those services end, Minnesota tobacco users, especially those in communities most harmed by tobacco use, have ongoing access to quitline help.

According to a new report, smoking in Minnesota is responsible for over \$7 billion annually in health care costs and lost productivity. Helping people quit and preventing youth from starting will not only reduce death and disease caused by tobacco, but it will also reduce health care costs. In 2016, the state collected \$815 million in tobacco settlement payments and tobacco taxes – more than enough to fund both tobacco cessation and prevention efforts like the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP).

Every other state has a tobacco quitline. To ensure Minnesota smokers looking for quitting support have a place to go in the future, please include new funding for a quitline here in our state.

cc: Governor Mark Dayton
Commissioner Edward Ehlinger, Minnesota Department of Health
Senator Paul Gazelka, Senate Majority Leader
Senator Tom Bakk, Senate Minority Leader
Senator Jeff Hayden, Minority Lead, Senate Health and Human Services Reform Finance and Policy
Representative Kurt Daudt, Speaker of the House
Representative Melissa Hortman, House Minority Leader
Representative Erin Murphy, Minority Lead, House Health and Human Services Finance
Representative Tina Liebling, Minority Lead, House Health and Human Services Reform



Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation is a coalition of Minnesota organizations that share a common goal of saving Minnesota youth from a lifetime of addiction to tobacco. Each year in Minnesota tobacco use is responsible for more than 6,300 deaths and more than \$3 billion in preventable health care costs, and 95 percent of adult smokers started before the age of 21. The coalition supports policies that reduce youth smoking, including keeping tobacco prices high, raising the tobacco sale age to 21, limiting access to candy-, fruit- and menthol-flavored tobacco and funding future tobacco prevention programs.

Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation partners include:

<i>A Healthier Southwest</i>	<i>March of Dimes</i>
<i>African American Leadership Forum</i>	<i>Mayo Clinic</i>
<i>Allina Health</i>	<i>Medica</i>
<i>American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network</i>	<i>Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians</i>
<i>American Heart Association</i>	<i>MN Association of Community Health Centers</i>
<i>American Lung Association in Minnesota</i>	<i>Minnesota Cancer Alliance</i>
<i>Apple Tree Dental</i>	<i>MN Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics</i>
<i>Association for Nonsmokers – Minnesota</i>	<i>Minnesota Council of Health Plans</i>
<i>Becker County Energize</i>	<i>Minnesota Hospital Association</i>
<i>Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota</i>	<i>Minnesota Medical Association</i>
<i>CentraCare Health</i>	<i>Minnesota Oral Health Coalition</i>
<i>Children’s Defense Fund-Minnesota</i>	<i>Minnesota Public Health Association</i>
<i>Children’s Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota</i>	<i>Model Cities of St. Paul, Inc.</i>
<i>ClearWay MinnesotaSM</i>	<i>NAMI Minnesota</i>
<i>Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio – CLUES</i>	<i>North Memorial Health Care</i>
<i>Essentia Health</i>	<i>NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center</i>
<i>Four Corners Partnership</i>	<i>PartnerSHIP 4 Health</i>
<i>Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare</i>	<i>Perham Health</i>
<i>HealthEast</i>	<i>Rainbow Health Initiative</i>
<i>HealthPartners</i>	<i>SEIU Healthcare Minnesota</i>
<i>Hennepin County Medical Center</i>	<i>St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce</i>
<i>Hope Dental Clinic</i>	<i>Tobacco Free Alliance</i>
<i>Indigenous Peoples Task Force</i>	<i>Twin Cities Medical Society</i>
<i>ISAIAH</i>	<i>UCare</i>
<i>LAAMPP Institute</i>	<i>WellShare International</i>
<i>Lake Region Healthcare</i>	
<i>Lincoln Park Children and Families Collaborative</i>	
<i>Local Public Health Association of Minnesota</i>	