



# Indiana's SACCHO

State Association of County and City Health Officials

## OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

Theodore A. Wafart, M.D.  
President  
Dubois County

Merle Holsopple, M.D.  
President-elect  
Daviess County

Virginia Caine, M.D.  
Treasurer  
Marion County

Jeremy Adler, M.D.  
Tippecanoe County

Rex Allman, M.D.  
Pulaski County

Paul Broderick, D.O.  
Morgan County

Paul Halverson, DrPH, FACHE  
Dean  
Richard M. Fairbanks School of  
Public Health (IUPUI)

Daniel A. Nafziger, M.D., M.S.  
Elkhart County

William Remington, Jr., M.D.  
Kosciusko County

Kenneth Spear, M.D.  
Vanderburgh County

Larry Sutton, D.O.  
Martin County

Mohammad Torabi, Ph.D., MPH  
Dean  
School of Public Health (IUB)

Don Zent, M.D.  
Howard County

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/  
Secretary  
Pamela J. Todd, M.S.

January 25, 2016

Office of the Governor  
Statehouse  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2797

Re: Support for strengthening Indiana's tobacco free law

Dear Governor Pence:

The Indiana State Association of County and City Health Officials is a state association of physicians and public health professionals representing Indiana's 93 health departments. We are writing to you today to ask for your help. We urge you to support strengthening our state's existing Smoke Free Air Law (House Enrolled Act 1149) by expanding current exclusions on tobacco use to include inhalation of vaporized tobacco and to cover such venues as restaurants, bars, taverns and casinos.

It is estimated that 1,426 Hoosier infants, children, and adults died in 2008 from secondhand smoke-related diseases – many of these deaths could have been prevented with a more comprehensive smoke free air law. The cost to us isn't just the loss of loved ones. In 2010 alone, Indiana spent \$1.3 billion dollars on health care costs associated with second hand smoke.<sup>i</sup> With more than 7,000 chemicals in secondhand smoke – of which 70 can cause cancer – there is no amount of secondhand smoke that is risk-free.<sup>ii</sup> Safeguarding the public, including children, families and workers, from unnecessary exposure to toxic chemicals is not only our moral obligation, but one that makes excellent fiscal sense.

Your leadership in encouraging Indiana's legislature to strengthen our law will have far reaching public health benefits beyond protecting the citizenry of Indiana from secondhand smoke. It will protect people suffering from asthma and other respiratory illnesses. It will lessen the burden of cardiovascular disease and the attendant complications of peripheral vascular disease. Strengthening our existing law would produce healthcare savings across the whole state, while saving lives and reducing disability and morbidity.

- Scientific evidence is clear that increasing the tax on tobacco reduces demand and has a direct correlation with lowering youth tobacco use. Indiana's tobacco sales tax per pack is \$0.995. Ohio's tobacco sales tax is \$1.25, Kentucky, \$0.60, Illinois, \$0.98, and Michigan is \$2.00.<sup>iii</sup>
- Data show that 22.9% of Indiana adults smoke, up from 21.9% last year.<sup>iv</sup>
- Indiana's smoking prevalence rate among pregnant Medicaid members was 25.9% in 2013.<sup>v</sup>

Indiana SACCHO, 8063 Madison Avenue, PMB 289, Indianapolis, IN 46227  
Ph: 812-360-2050 Fax: 812-822-3044 Email: ptodd614@comcast.net



# Indiana's SACCHO

State Association of County and City Health Officials

- Smoking rates among pregnant women continue to be among the highest in the nation.<sup>vi</sup>
- The tobacco industry spends \$475.2 million annually to market their products to Hoosier children and adults.<sup>vii</sup>
- High school students (30%) and middle school students (27%) reported being exposed to secondhand smoke in their home on at least one day in the past week in 2010.

Strengthening Indiana's Smoke Free Air Law would provide protections for non-smokers including infants, children and employees affected by secondhand smoke.

If supported, a stronger smoke free air law would provide millions of Hoosiers with a great reason to thank you.

Sincerely,

Theodore A. Wafart, MD  
President

cc: Indiana Senate  
Indiana House of Representatives  
Indiana Campaign for Smoke Free Air  
Indiana State Department of Health  
IU Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health at IUPUI  
IU School of Public Health at IUB

---

<sup>i</sup> Saywell, R., Zollinger, T.W., Lewis, C. K., Jay, S.J. (2013). A model for estimating the economic impact of secondhand smoke exposure: A study in Indiana.

<sup>ii</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014 [accessed 2015 Dec 11].

<sup>iii</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. State Cigarette Excise Taxes — United States, 2010–2011. MMWR 2012;61(12):201-204. Accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6112a1.htm#tab>.

<sup>iv</sup> United Health Foundation. America's Health Rankings. Annual report 2015. Accessible at <http://www.americashealthrankings.org>.

<sup>v</sup> Indiana State Department of Health. Indiana Natality Report, 2013.

<sup>vi</sup> Indiana State Department of Health. Indiana's Tobacco Burden, 2014.

<sup>vii</sup> Tobacco Free Kids. Broken Promises to our children: A state-by-state look at the 1998 state tobacco settlement 16 years later, 2015. Accessible at <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/microsites/statereport2016/#introduction>  
[Tobacco marketing](#)