



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Appropriations and Public Health Committees

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Good Afternoon. My name is Renée Coleman-Mitchell, Chief of the Community Health and Prevention Section at the Department of Public Health (DPH). Thank you for this opportunity to discuss the recommendations of the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund Board of Trustees in the Annual Report for 2014.

These recommendations align with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs released earlier this year.

CDC first published their guidelines in 1999, which were updated in 2007 and again in 2014 to incorporate evidence-based findings and lessons learned from state tobacco control programs. CDC details in their guidelines what steps every state should take in order to reduce the burden caused by tobacco use. Annual smoking-attributable economic expenditures in Connecticut alone are estimated at \$1.4 billion (that includes \$640 million in hospital care, \$218 million in ambulatory care, \$214 million in nursing home care, and \$245 million for prescription drugs); and in addition, the average annual productivity losses associated with smoking are more than \$1 billion (2000-2004). These costs are not sustainable.

We know what works, and we can help to end the tobacco use epidemic. The more states invest in tobacco control, the greater the reduction in tobacco use.

Supporting funding for each of the components in Best Practices is more effective than picking one or two: the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. We especially want to thank the Board for recommending administration, infrastructure, and management funding within this allocation in alignment with CDC recommendations. We appreciate the opportunity to further reduce the rate of tobacco use among Connecticut residents, and look forward to continuing to achieve health equity by eliminating tobacco-related disparities in the state.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.