

## TOBACCO TAX INCREASE FOR A HEALTHY COLORADO

This proposed constitutional amendment will ask voters to **increase taxes on tobacco products in order to raise money for critical unmet health needs for all Coloradans**, especially those most impacted by tobacco use. It will also fully fund tobacco education programs to reduce smoking, particularly among young people.

This amendment is supported by groups such as the United Veterans Committee of Colorado, Children's Hospital Colorado, the American Heart Association, and the American Lung Association, to name a few.

Every year, more than 5,000 Coloradans — most of whom started smoking as teenagers — die from tobacco-related illnesses. This measure will fully fund programs to reduce tobacco use in Colorado by keeping kids from starting to smoke and helping smokers quit.

Veterans across Colorado suffer a higher rate of suicide, homelessness, and tobacco-related diseases, as well as face many other unmet

health care needs. All Colorado veterans deserve the best possible health care services. This measure dramatically increases funding for veterans' health programs, particularly for those who face the added challenge of post-traumatic stress disorder.

This measure also will improve the lives of all Coloradans by making the largest investment in state history into cutting-edge, tobacco-related research at our best medical and research centers. This investment, which is required to be spent only at in-state research facilities, will result in new treatments for the prevention and detection of cancer, heart and lung disease, Alzheimer's disease, as well as research into early-childhood development.

The tax — an increase of \$1.75 on a pack of cigarettes and a 22% increase on other tobacco products like cigars and chewing tobacco — will raise approximately \$315 million annually. The money would be divided as follows:

- \$92 million (27%) for research at Colorado medical and research centers into treatments for the prevention of cancer, heart and lung disease, Alzheimer's disease, and youth mental health
- \$54 million (16%) to meet the Centers for Disease Control prevention recommendations for funding of tobacco education, prevention, and cessation programs for Colorado's youth and adults
- \$48 million (14%) to fund unmet medical and mental health needs for 500,000 veterans
- \$34 million (10%) to increase access to oral, behavioral and primary care in rural and underserved areas
- \$34 million (10%) to expand access to youth behavioral health services
- \$17 million (5%) to provide student debt repayment and professional training tracks targeted at medical professionals serving rural and underserved areas of Colorado
- \$36 million to current tobacco tax funded programs to compensate for tax revenue reductions due to lower tobacco use once the new tax is in place