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Poll: Majority of Minnesotans Support Raising the Price of Tobacco *66 percent support \$1.50 increase to reduce smoking*

Minneapolis, MN (05/01/13) – A new poll released today by the Raise it for Health coalition shows that 66 percent of Minnesotans support raising the tobacco tax by \$1.50 per pack to address Minnesota's budget deficit, help addicted smokers quit and keep kids from starting to smoke.

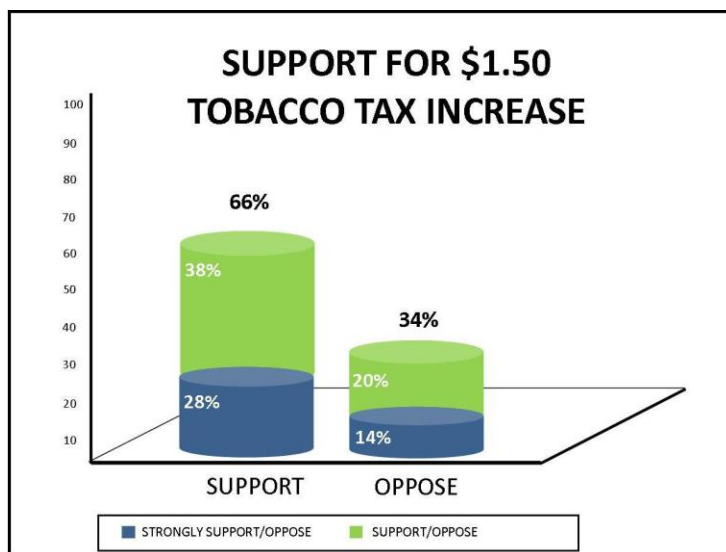
"This new poll illustrates that support for raising the price of tobacco is strong throughout the state," said Molly Moilanen, Director of Public Affairs at ClearWay Minnesota and co-chair of the Raise it for Health coalition. **"A strong majority of Minnesotans – 66 percent – support increasing the tobacco tax by \$1.50 per pack. By raising the price this year, we can help prevent tens of thousands of kids from a lifetime of addiction and help thousands of adults stop smoking."**

According to the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, a \$1.50 per pack increase in the state's cigarette tax would prevent 47,700 Minnesota kids from becoming addicted adults, help 36,600 current smokers quit and save 27,700 Minnesotans from premature smoking-related deaths.

Governor Mark Dayton included a cigarette tax increase in his biennial budget proposal, and increases are also part of both the Senate and House tax bills currently under consideration.

"There is broad agreement among Minnesotans on this issue," said Dr. Bill Morris, president of Decision Resources Ltd., the firm that administered the poll. **"Unlike the results we see for many other tax questions, a solid majority from virtually every demographic group in the state – including gender, age, income level and geography – supports raising the tax by \$1.50."**

"We also found no partisan divide over the issue of the tobacco tax," Dr. Morris continued. **"Democrats (68 percent), Republicans (65 percent) and Independents (62 percent) all support a \$1.50 tobacco tax increase by significant margins."**



This study contains the results of a sample of 625 randomly selected adult residents of the state of Minnesota. Professional interviewers conducted the survey by telephone between April 4 and 13, 2013. Both landline and cell phone respondents were included in the overall sample. The typical respondent took 14 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The results of the study are projectable to all Minnesota adult residents within $\pm 4.0\%$ in 95 out of 100 cases.

For more information, including methodology, contact Anne Mason at amason@clearwaymn.org, or view full results at www.RaiseitforHealth.org. This poll was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Raise it for Health is a coalition of Minnesota's leading health and nonprofit organizations with a common goal of reducing tobacco use in the state. Partners include: AARP Minnesota, Allina Health, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Heart Association, American Lung Association in Minnesota, Association of Minnesota Counties, Association for Nonsmokers – MN, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, CentraCare Health System, Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota, ClearWay MinnesotaSM, Courage Center, Four Corners Partnership, HealthEast Care System, HealthPartners, LAAMPP Institute, Local Public Health Association, Mayo Clinic, Medica, Metro-MN Oncology Nursing Society, Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians, Minnesota Cancer Alliance, Minnesota Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Minnesota Comprehensive Health Association, Minnesota Council of Health Plans, Minnesota Medical Association, Minnesota Public Health Association, Park Nicollet Health Services, PartnerSHIP 4 Health, School Nurse Organization of Minnesota, Service Employees International Union Healthcare Minnesota, Southwest Community Health Improvement Program, and Twin Cities Medical Society.

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