

March 2009

# Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition E-Newsletter

# Supporting Tobacco Control for Kansas

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## Internet Tobacco Control and Health Resource Links

### Regional

- Clean Air Kansas City
- Clean Air Lawrence
- Clean Air Manhattan
- Reno County Tobacco Free
- Central Kansas Foundation (Salina)
- Tobacco Free Wichita

### State

- KDHE Tobacco Use Prevention TASK
- Cancer Kansas
- It's Everybody's Business
- Kansas Association of Local Health Departments
- Kansas Public Health Association
- Kansas Health Institute

### National

- CDC Tobacco & Health Tobacco.Org
- Americans for Non-Smokers Rights
- Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids
- Tobacco Control Network
- American Cancer Society
- American Heart Association
- American Lung Association
- National Cancer Institute

## Breaking News! Clean air in Kansas

The Kansas Clean Indoor Air Act is alive and is now HB 2221, not SB 25.

The Kansas Clean Indoor Air Act has been resurrected in the Senate as HB 2221, with all the provisions of SB 25, the original bill that passed in the Senate.

The bill is due to be debated for passage in the full Senate, probably on Tuesday, March 31.

Approval by the Senate could lead to a Senate and House conference. Any agreement coming out from the conference committee would have to be approved by majorities in both the Senate and the House.

There is still time to contact your legislators to tell them you support a clean indoor air law for Kansas this year. See <http://www.kslegislature.org/legsrv-house/searchHouse.do> for contact information for your representative and <http://www.kslegislature.org/legsrv-senate/searchSenate.do> for contact information for your senator.

## KDHE names new health director

Dr. Jason Eberhart-Phillips, MD, MPH, has begun work as the new Health Director and Kansas State Health Officer at the Department of Health and Environment. Since 2006, Dr. Eberhart-Phillips was the county health officer in El Dorado County, California. He has also served in the past as the chronic disease director for the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, as a medical epidemiologist for the ESR Health Communicable Disease Centre in Porirua, New Zealand, and as an Epidemic Intelligence Service officer for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Dr. Eberhart-Phillips earned his undergraduate degree in journalism from Northwestern University and his medical degree from the University of *continued on next page*

*The mission of Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition is to reduce the prevalence of tobacco use among Kansans, particularly among children and youth, to improve health and to avoid the negative economic impact of tobacco use.*



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California-San Francisco. He also holds a master's degree in public health from the University of California-Berkeley and a master of divinity degree from the Pacific School of Religion. Before becoming a physician, Dr. Eberhart-Phillips worked as a news reporter in Pennsylvania and Arizona. He has been the lead or principal investigator on a number of research and surveillance activities. He is the author of two books and numerous medical articles.

## Legacy Foundation funding available

The Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition received word it has been awarded a second year of funding from the American Legacy Foundation in the amount of \$70,000. This funding will work with additional youth grant funding from the Kansas Health Foundation to empower Kansas TASK youth groups to mobilize to reduce tobacco use in Kansas through media they will design and disseminate. The grant funding centers around mini grants to youth TASK groups with grant activities culminating in a statewide youth conference in November.

## Coalition seeking nominations for officers and board members

The Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition is now accepting referrals and nominations for candidates for president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, and representatives from the six regions in the state to serve on the board of directors from July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010. See the map below for the how the regions are structured.

If you are interested or know someone who is or has been a great community leader or advocate in tobacco control activities, please contact TFKC as soon as possible with his or her name and contact information or contact Joan Smith, Manhattan-Riley County Health Department at [jhsmitheduc@yahoo.com](mailto:jhsmitheduc@yahoo.com)

A TFKC nominating committee will review all prospects, and names will be added to the June ballot for voting by the membership. All nominees must be a member of TFKC for the past year.

## Local smokefree efforts in Kansas

All action is local these days, with McPherson being the latest city to adopt a smokefree ordinance, although with some exemptions and ventilation options. Junction City, Emporia, Hutchinson and Salina have witnessed a great deal of turmoil on this issue recently. Emporia voters on April 7 facing a repeal ballot of an ordinance that has not been implemented. Topeka is beginning its efforts and other communities are working to set up the process of moving forward to provide clean inside air provisions for their cities.

## Did you kick any butts?

March 25 was the 14th annual Kick Butts Day, the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids' celebration of youth leadership and activism in the fight against tobacco use. Did your group or community have any special activities? Would you please share them with TFKC so we can celebrate your success?

## FDA tobacco regulation on the horizon

The U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee in early March set Congress on a course to take truly historic action to reduce tobacco use by approving legislation granting the U.S. Food and Drug Administration authority over tobacco products. The committee's 39-13 vote underscores the broad, bipartisan support for this legislation.

This legislation would grant the FDA the authority and resources to effectively regulate the manufacturing, marketing and sale of tobacco products. Among other things, it would:

- Restrict tobacco advertising and promotions,

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especially to children.

- Stop illegal sales of tobacco products to children.
- Require larger, more effective health warnings on tobacco packages and advertising.
- Ban misleading health claims such as “light” and “low-tar” and strictly regulate all health claims about tobacco products to ensure they are scientifically proven and do not discourage current tobacco users from quitting or encourage new users to start.
- Require tobacco companies to disclose the contents of tobacco products, as well as changes in products and research about their health effects.
- Empower the FDA to require changes in tobacco products, such as the removal or reduction of harmful ingredients or the reduction of nicotine levels.

## Price hike on cigarettes to reduce tobacco use

On March 31, 62 cents will be added in federal excise taxes to each package of cigarettes. The revenue raised by this federal action will be used to fund additional health coverage for children through the SCHIP program. Higher excise taxes also should encourage reduced consumption.

Tobacco companies, never at a loss for making money, have already raised prices on their products as a way of recouping additional funds prior to the tax increase going into effect. Perhaps this price increase also will assist smokefree air efforts across the state as even more Kansas adults begin to reduce their cigarette use or quit completely.

One complication is that the price increases, and expected reduction in use, will lead to a decrease

in excise tax revenues for the state of Kansas. To keep Kansas excise tax revenues at the same level, an additional state excise tax could be imposed by the state legislature; which at this point it seems disinclined to do so.

## Advocates helping carry our message to the Legislature

At the beginning of the legislative session, Anne Spiess joined the staff of the American Cancer Society as legislative/government relations director for Kansas. Spiess previously was president of the Kansas Telecommunications Industry Association, lobbying on behalf of KTIA and its members on telecommunications issues. She also has worked as a contract lobbyist. She will be working on top American Cancer Society priorities related to tobacco control, breast and colon cancer, quality of life for cancer patients and health care issues.

John Neuenswander joined the staff of the American Lung Association of the Central States ALA in January as the Director of Advocacy for the state of Kansas and the Kansas City metro area. During 2008 John worked on Jim Slattery’s race for the U.S. Senate. John will be working on tobacco control and clean indoor and outdoor air issues.

## Watch for new strategic tobacco control planning process

It is time to begin the process of setting out the long range plan for tobacco control in the state. Partners will be setting up strategy meetings shortly to set out the goals and objectives needed for the 2010-2015 Tobacco Control Strategic Plan for Kansas.