

# Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition

## E-Newsletter

Supporting Tobacco Control for Kansas

February 2006, Volume 1, Issue 1

Welcome to the new TFKC E-Newsletter for those interested or involved in tobacco control in Kansas. We would like to hear your comments and ideas for future issues. See the “Sign Up” information on the previous page to receive this newsletter every month.

## Statewide Meeting

More than 40 members of the Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition met Thursday, January 26 at the Kansas State Historical Society and Museum in Topeka.

In addition to the business meeting and various reports, a panel discussion was held with advocates and policymakers on how to promote policy changes to state and local elected officials. Panel members were: Kevin Walker, Vice President of Advocacy, American Heart Association; Lisa Benlon, Director of Government Relations - Kansas, American Cancer Society; Nicole Brown, Health Educator, Johnson County Health Department; and Ted Mintun, Salina tobacco control advocate.

The *Blue Print for Advocacy* panel noted that the best form of advocacy often includes a compelling story about why your position is important. Your story is sometimes better than facts and figures. Other points:

- Respect the policymaker’s time
- Communicate in a manner with which each is comfortable; don’t send an email if they don’t read email
- You are most effective with people you already know; get to know your legislators and council member before you need their help
- Share what you learn with the rest of you coalition; it helps fill in the puzzle when you all contribute pieces
- Make sure the right person makes the “ask” — usually a friend of the policy maker rather than the coalition chair
- If you go as a group, make sure you are all on the same page before the visit begins; don’t confuse the policymaker with conflicting viewpoints

## **KDHE Tobacco Control Grants**

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment has awarded grants for 2006 that bring tobacco use prevention efforts in several Kansas locations up to CDC recommended funding levels.

The recipients are: **Northeast Kansas Multi-County Board of Health**, Award - \$184,645, Contact - Pamela Montgomery, Program Manager, Tobacco Use Prevention Program; **Lawrence- Douglas County Department of Health**, Award - \$183,665, Contact - Janelle Martin; **Manhattan- Riley County Department of Health**, Award - \$94,560, Contact: Joan Smith; **Cloud County Health Department**, Award - \$44,676, Contact: Diane McNichols; and **Central Kansas Foundation**, Award: \$221,170, Contact: Miriam Ibrahim.

## **Hearing Held on Bill to Ban Flavored Cigarettes**

HB 2552 was introduced before the 2006 Kansas legislative session by Rep. Jim Ward (D-Wichita) and assigned to the House Judiciary Committee. The bill would amending K.S.A. 2005 Supp 79-3321 and 79- 3322 to ban flavored cigarettes. A hearing was held on January 26.

*The bill says No person shall sell or offer for sale in this state any cigarette or component part thereof, including, but not limited to the tobacco, paper, roll or filter, which contains a natural or artificial constituent or additive that causes such cigarette or its smoke to have a characterizing flavor. For the purposes of this subsection, the phrase, "characterizing flavor" shall include, but not be limited to, any fruit, chocolate, vanilla, honey, candy, mint, cocoa, dessert, alcoholic beverage, herb or spice flavoring. The phrase shall not include tobacco or menthol.*

Lisa Benlon, American Cancer Society; Dr. Howard Rodenberg, Director of Health with KDHE; and Gary Brunk, Director of Kansas Action for Children, spoke in favor of prohibiting the sale of cigarettes with special flavors particularly attractive to children. A representative of the RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company was brought in to speak against the bill. Rep. Michael O'Neal, the chair of the committee, indicated that he sees enforcement of the existing law rather than the banning of a specific type of a legal product as being a question to consider. Another point brought up related to concerns such a ban would lead to similar prohibitions against flavored liquors.

The proponents for the bill noted flavored cigarettes were targeted toward children and that young people have access to these products through other social sources, not just through retail sales.

If your House member is on the Judiciary Committee, please contact him or her to show your support of banning flavored cigarettes in Kansas. A list of House Judiciary Committee members is at the end of this newsletter.

## **Other Kansas Legislation - HB 2739**

HB 2739 was introduced to expand, as of January 1, 2007, the prohibition on smoking in a medical care facility to a prohibition of all tobacco use in a medical facility building or on medical care facility property, with the only exception being a provision to allow an area for tobacco use for residents in a licensed long-term medical facility, if the area was well ventilated.

## **ALA Releases Tobacco Report Card**

The annual American Lung Association State of Tobacco Control: 2005 report has been released. This national report card analyzes state tobacco control laws in four key areas — smokefree air, tobacco program funding, cigarette excise taxes and youth access to tobacco. Kansas scored grades of “F” in smokefree air, “F” in tobacco prevention and control spending, “F” in youth access to tobacco and a “D” for its cigarette excise tax.

This report should be a wake-up call to the legislature and our governor about the status of tobacco control in Kansas. With the notable exceptions of Lawrence, Fairway and Bel Aire, our local smokefree air laws are weak. Approximately 38,000 non-smoking Americans die from secondhand smoke each year. No one in Kansas should have to breathe toxic fumes when visiting or working in a public establishment. The time is now to pass smokefree laws that will save lives. Kansas communities should follow Lawrence’s lead and enact comprehensive clean indoor air ordinances.

**Complete story at**

**[http://lungaction.org/reports/reportcard05.tcl?geo\\_area\\_id=20](http://lungaction.org/reports/reportcard05.tcl?geo_area_id=20)**

## **SRS Program Expands**

An expanded SRS program is designed to commend clerks and retailers who refuse to sell tobacco products to minors. The research-based outreach program encourages retailers to comply with Kansas’ statutes that make it illegal to sell any tobacco products to minors. Teams of adults and youth under 18 will visit retail establishments where youth will attempt to purchase tobacco products. Clerks who do not sell will be rewarded for their actions. Those who would sell will receive a reminder that clerks who sell tobacco products to minors face a misdemeanor charge along with a \$200 fine. The complete release is found at **<http://www.srskansas.org/SRSPress/2006/011906a.htm>**

TFKC is a member of the group supporting this program.

The Annual Synar Report by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) can be found at **<http://www.srs.kansas.org/hcp/aaps/pdf/FFY2006KANSASASR.pdf>**



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## Save the Date

**Regional Network Training** \*\*\* Programs will include speakers on coalition building and maintenance, on clean indoor air and youth access and on projects across the state.

- March 1 - Salina
- March 2 - Bel Aire
- March 15 - Lawrence
- March 16 - Girard
- March 28 - Garden City
- March 30 - Hays

Contact [mjhellebust@tobaccofreekansas.org](mailto:mjhellebust@tobaccofreekansas.org) for more information.

**Clean Air Strike Training** - April 19, 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. - Atchison Heritage Conference Center (710 S 9th St) free training for high schools in Atchison, Brown, Doniphan, Jackson, Jefferson and Nemaha Counties to help students advocate for a tobacco free lifestyle. Anyone can attend. Contact the NEK Tobacco Use Prevention Program for information at [riverbluff@direcway.com](mailto:riverbluff@direcway.com).

**Kick Butts Day** - April 5, 2006

**13th World Conference on Tobacco OR Health** - July 12-15, 2006, Washington, DC

## House Judiciary Committee

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