

Board of County Commissioners

Agenda Request

Date of Meeting: March 3, 2009

Date Submitted: February 13, 2009

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Lynn Artz, County Commissioner, District 5

Subject: Request Board Approval of a Resolution to Reduce Smoking among Youth by Supporting an Increase in the State Excise Tax on Cigarettes

Statement of Issue:

This agenda item requests Board approval of a Resolution to reduce cigarette smoking among youth by joining other counties to support an increase in the state excise tax on cigarettes.

Background/Description:

Cigarette smoking is a major threat to the future health of Wakulla's children. Wakulla County has a high rate of cigarette smoking, higher than the state and national averages. Studies have shown that children whose parents smoke cigarettes are more likely to become smokers themselves. Research also has shown that raising the price of cigarettes reduces smoking among youth.

The lobbyists for the Florida Association of Counties have circulated a sample Resolution to member counties (including Wakulla County) for action. The Resolution encourages Florida's legislators and Governor to increase Florida's excise tax on cigarettes by \$1.00 per pack to reduce youth smoking. The revenue generated by this tax increase can help to fund critical healthcare priorities such as health insurance for the medically need and emergency room care.

Analysis:

Increasing the price of cigarettes by increasing state or federal excise taxes is an effective tobacco use prevention strategy -- and also can raise revenue for other health programs. Wakulla County should join other counties in supporting an increase in the state's excise tax on cigarettes.

Options:

1. Approve the Resolution to Reduce Smoking by Youth.
2. Do not approve the Resolution.
3. Board direction.

Recommendation:

Option #1

Attachment:

1. Resolution