

**Resolution to Reduce Youth Smoking and  
Improve the Health of Citizens in Florida**

**WHEREAS**, every year, 22,500 new Florida children become addicted to tobacco and more than one-third of them will die prematurely because of this addiction; and

**WHEREAS**, 90 percent of all adult smokers surveyed admitted they started smoking during their teenage years; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Florida spends \$1.2 Billion a year in Medicaid dollars on smoking related illness, while receiving approximately \$400 million in cigarette tax revenue; and

**WHEREAS**, the overall cost of healthcare for smokers in Florida, annually, including private insurances costs is estimated at over \$6.3 Billion a year; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida's 34-cent cigarette excise tax is one of the lowest in the United States and has not been raised in nearly two decades; and

**WHEREAS**, increasing Florida's cigarette tax by \$1.00 would reduce the number of youth that smoke by 16.3 percent and significantly reduce the amount of adults who smoke, save \$3.8 Billion in long-term health care costs, and provide nearly \$631 million in additional state revenues annually to cover rising health care costs; and

**WHEREAS**, reduced state budget revenues threaten established programs to provide health insurance and health care services for the most vulnerable Floridians and provide no opportunity for expansion of programs and services.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the County Commission of Wakulla County, Florida does hereby support increasing the Cigarette Excise Tax in Florida by \$1.00 per pack, which will reduce smoking, especially among children and fund critical healthcare priorities such as Medically Needy health insurance, emergency room care, disease prevention and medical research; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a suitable copy of this resolution be transmitted to Senator Al Lawson, the Wakulla County Legislative Delegation Chair in Tallahassee, to Representative Larry Cretul, the Speaker of the Florida House, to Senator Jeff Atwater, Senate President, and to Governor Charlie Crist.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA ON MARCH 3, 2009

WAKULLA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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HOWARD KESSLER, Chairman

ATTEST:

APPROVE AS TO FORM:

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BRENT X. THURMOND, Clerk of Court

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RONALD A. MOWREY, Esquire