



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Michigan ranks dead last in the nation for funding tobacco prevention programs

*Report highlights urgency to increase prevention funding, stop shortchanging Michigan kids*

**LANSING** – Michigan continues to shortchange programs that prevent kids from using tobacco products and help tobacco users quit. In fact, [Michigan is now ranked 50<sup>th</sup>](#) and is tied with West Virginia for last place, according to a new report released last week. "[Broken Promises to Our Children: A State-by-State Look at the 1998 Tobacco Settlement](#)" is an annual report released by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights and Truth Initiative.

Currently, Michigan only allocates \$1.8 million for tobacco prevention programs, just 1.6% of what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends. In contrast, the CDC recommends that Michigan allocate \$110.6 million each year to fully protect residents.

"It's unacceptable that Michigan is dead last in funding tobacco prevention programs," said Jodi Radke, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids regional director and Keep MI Kids Tobacco Free Alliance co-chair. "The time is long overdue for policymakers to right this wrong, invest in lifesaving programs, and pass the historic bill package aimed at protecting Michigan kids from vaping and tobacco addiction."

Maine is the only state to fully fund tobacco prevention and cessation programs at levels recommended by the CDC. Eight states provide at least 50% of the CDC's recommended funding, while 31 states and the District of Columbia are spending less than a quarter of the CDC recommendation.

Tobacco companies spend nearly \$12 to market tobacco products for every \$1 states invest to reduce tobacco use. According to the most recent data from the Federal Trade Commission (for 2022), the major tobacco companies spend \$8.6 billion a year – nearly \$1 million per hour – to market cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products in the U.S. In Michigan, the tobacco industry spends over \$300 million each year to lure the next generation of tobacco users into a lifetime of addiction.

The Keep MI Kids Tobacco Free Alliance is urging policymakers to advance the comprehensive tobacco prevention legislative package (Senate Bills 647-654) introduced in November in the Michigan Senate. The package includes Senate Bill 648, sponsored by Sen. Stephanie Chang, that would tax e-cigarettes and vaping products in Michigan for the first time and increase tobacco taxes with proceeds dedicated to efforts to reduce tobacco use among youth. Other components of the comprehensive bill package include ending the sale of flavored tobacco products, requiring tobacco retailers to have a license, and restoring local control empowering cities to pass stronger tobacco prevention measures if they so choose.

“We urge lawmakers to prioritize the health of Michiganders by investing in tobacco prevention programs,” said Dr. Brittany Tayler, internist and pediatrician at Hurley Medical Center, assistant professor at the Pediatric Public Health Initiative at Michigan State University and co-chair of Keep MI Kids Tobacco Free Alliance. “This is NOT an area where Michigan should be last in the country. We hope this last-place ranking is a wake-up call for the need for a comprehensive policy solution in our state.”

Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Michigan and is responsible for more than 16,000 deaths per year. Smoking costs each Michigan household over \$1,000 annually in excess taxes to cover smoking-related diseases. In addition, youth e-cigarette use remains a critical problem in Michigan and across the country. Youth and young adults are especially vulnerable to the harmful effects of nicotine which can damage the developing adolescent brain and increase the risk for future smoking and addiction to other drugs.

### **About the Keep MI Kids Tobacco Free Alliance**

The Keep MI Kids Tobacco Free Alliance is a coalition of more than 120 school, public health and community-based organizations advocating for stronger tobacco prevention policies in Michigan. Learn more about the Alliance at [KeepMIKidsTobaccoFree.com](http://KeepMIKidsTobaccoFree.com).

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