

Proponent SB 376 – written only

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March 19, 2018

Dear Chairperson Tyson and Members of the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee,

The American Lung Association is asking that you support Senate Bill 376 to reduce the burden on tobacco and save lives by a significant tax increase on cigarettes and other tobacco products and by increasing new funding for tobacco prevention and cessation. We believe the legislature can save even more lives by increasing tax to a higher amount. In Kansas, tobacco use claims 4,400 adult lives each year while 13,200 kids try cigarettes for the first time. For every Kansan that ultimately dies from tobacco use, there are 20 more suffering from tobacco-related diseases and disability. Lung disease is the third leading cause of death in the U.S. The American Lung Association supports a tax increase because:

- **Increasing the price of tobacco is one of the most effective methods for preventing and reducing tobacco use.** Every 10 percent increase in the real price of tobacco reduces smoking prevalence by 1.5 percent and overall cigarette consumption by approximately 3 to 5 percent.
- **Increasing the price of tobacco is one of the most effective methods for preventing youth initiation and use among young adults.** Every 10 percent increase in the real price of tobacco reduces the number of youth who smoke by more than 5 percent, and the number of youth who start smoking by 10 percent. Youth are two to three times more responsive to price increases, and are more likely to quit or cut back on smoking in order to avoid paying more for cigarettes.
- **Certain smokers are more responsive to changes in the price of cigarettes.** Cigarette price and tax increases have been shown to reduce smoking among males, African Americans and Chicanos Latinos. Pregnant women are also more likely to reduce or quit smoking when tobacco prices rise.

On behalf of the American Lung Association, we would ask that you please support Senate Bill 376. If you have further questions please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Leah Martin

Director, Tobacco Control and Advocacy

American Lung Association

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