



April 29, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
H-232 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader
S-221 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader Reid:

We write today to urge the Congress to pass the President's budget proposal to increase the federal cigarette excise tax by 94 cents as well as to increase the federal taxes on all other tobacco products to an excise tax level comparable to cigarettes.

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in America. It kills 443,000 people each year and costs more than \$96 billion in direct annual health care expenditures and more than \$97 billion in lost productivity.

Tobacco taxes have a significant impact on reducing consumption and saving lives. A ten percent increase in the price of a pack of cigarettes reduces youth consumption by between six and seven percent, and overall consumption by approximately four percent. This decrease translates to fewer children who take up smoking, saving them from a lifelong deadly addiction, and more adults who quit smoking. The Congressional Budget Office affirmed the impact of increasing cigarette taxes on health care costs in its 2012 report *Raising the Excise Tax on Cigarettes: Effects on the Federal Budget*, in which it projected reduced consumption, premature smoking-caused deaths, and spending in Medicaid.

The evidence that higher federal excise taxes on cigarettes and all other addictive and deadly tobacco products will save lives is indisputable. We strongly urge you to support legislation increasing the tobacco tax and we look forward to working with all members of the House of Representatives and Senate toward its passage and enactment.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



John R. Seffrin, PhD
Chief Executive Officer
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network



Nancy A. Brown
Chief Executive Officer
American Heart Association



Harold Wimmer
National President and CEO
American Lung Association



Susan M. Liss
Executive Director
Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids