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Mother's Day Perfect Time to Tell Mom: "I Love You, Let Me Help You Quit Smoking"

**\$1 Per Pack Tobacco Tax Increase Provides Deterrent to Help Mom Kick Tobacco Addiction
While Generating New Revenue for State of Nevada**

Reno, NV– May 7, 2015 – Mother's Day is Sunday and the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is encouraging everyone who has a mother who uses tobacco to give their mom the type of loving support, encouragement and information that could help them quit smoking.

Research shows one of the most effective ways to encourage tobacco users to quit is by regularly and significantly increasing the price of tobacco. We applaud Nevada Senate Majority Leader Michael Roberson's amendment to SB 483 to increase the cigarette tax by \$1. Increasing the cigarette tax by \$1 per pack would provide a strong and scientifically-proven incentive to help moms and others give up tobacco.

The 2014 Surgeon General's Report shows, for the first time ever, women who smoke are as likely as men to die from many of the diseases caused by smoking. Women also face many gender-specific risks from tobacco use, including harm to reproductive health and complications during pregnancy, as well as giving birth to premature babies.

Nevada has one of highest smoking rates among women in the country, with more than 18 percent of all females in the state puffing cigarettes. Even pregnant women are smoking at fairly high rates—around 10 percent. That means there are 3,500 babies annually who suffer smoking-related problems at birth.

And, mothers are losing their lives. An estimated 660 Nevada kids have already lost their moms to smoking and another 1,300 women are predicted to die from smoking-related diseases this year alone. The alarming statistics were released by the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids: <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0257.pdf>

"We need to address both the human costs and the financial ramifications that smoking has on the state of Nevada," said ACS CAN Nevada's Government Relations Director Tom McCoy. "Taxpayers are shouldering a lot of the direct medical costs that result from treating tobacco-caused illnesses within state-supported public health programs. It amounts annually to \$148.9 million or \$796 per household. This doesn't include the estimated \$1 billion in indirect costs from lost productivity caused by tobacco."

McCoy says that is why ACS CAN has joined the Nevada American Heart Association, the American Lung Association Nevada and the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids in advocating for a \$1 per pack tobacco tax increase. The higher tax could make a big dent in smoking rates, keeping an estimated 10,000 youth from becoming smokers and helping more than 15,000 current smokers quit. A \$1.00 per pack tobacco tax increase that also includes commensurate tax increases on non-cigarette products could also be used to better fund tobacco use prevention and cessation programs

Nevada's current cigarette tax of 80 cents per pack lags behind much of the rest of the nation, ranking it 35th out of 50 states. The last time Nevada raised its cigarette tax was in 2003. Since then, 39 other states and the District of Columbia increased their cigarette taxes at least once.

Smaller increases in the price of tobacco products [can easily be offset by tobacco companies](#) with “buy-one, get-one free” deals, coupons, and other promotional discounting which negatively affect the number of people who will quit smoking as the price increases. An [in-depth fact sheet](#) explains why an additional \$1 per pack tax increase would better ensure that a tobacco tax will pay health and financial dividends compared to a 40 cent tax increase.

About ACS CAN

ACS CAN, the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society, supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. ACS CAN works to encourage elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN gives ordinary people extraordinary power to fight cancer with the training and tools they need to make their voices heard. For more information, visit www.acscan.org.

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