

Sustaining State Funding



for Tobacco Control

S N A P S H O T F R O M N E B R A S K A

BACKGROUND

Based on CDC's Best Practices funding recommendations, Nebraska should be spending a minimum of \$13.3 million a year on its comprehensive tobacco control program.

In 2000: the Nebraska Legislature approved \$7 million a year for 3 years to fund Tobacco Free Nebraska (TFN).

In 2003: citing budget concerns, the legislature cut TFN's budget from \$7 million a year to \$405,000 per year.

In 2004: the Nebraska Legislature used Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) money to increase TFN's funding to \$2.5 million and included statutory language to assure that the appropriation of \$2.5 million would remain in effect.



What did Tobacco Free Nebraska and tobacco control advocates WANT?

- Ideally, they wanted to get \$13.3 million a year of MSA funds dedicated to their comprehensive tobacco control program.
- Given a difficult budget situation, they believed that \$5 million a year was a reasonable request.
- They also wanted statutory language that would provide some assurance that any appropriation would be in effect for multiple years.

WHO could give this to them?

- Governor
- Legislature

WHAT did the legislators need to hear?

- Lives will be saved.
- Unless funding is restored, 3 years of infrastructure and capacity building will be erased and tobacco control gains will be lost.

From WHOM did the legislators need to hear these messages?

- Community members, especially those with no financial interest in the funding request. Involvement of community members does not guarantee success, but without it failure is almost guaranteed.
- Program staff.
- Young people, coalition members, those personally affected by tobacco use, those who have benefited from tobacco control programs (for example, those who have successfully quit smoking), and advocates.

HOW did advocates get legislators to hear their messages?

- By inviting legislators to local coalition meetings where they could hear descriptions of program elements, program successes and personal stories of program participants.
- Through face-to-face meetings, letters, emails, and telephone calls.
- Through a "lobby breakfast" that focused on a range of cancer issues and not specifically tobacco.

WHAT did Tobacco Free Nebraska get?

- \$2.5 million a year of MSA money.
- Statutory language that earmarks this MSA funding for Tobacco Free Nebraska.

For further information, please contact

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