

**Progress on Achieving Texas Tobacco
Reduction Goals:
A Report to the 79th Legislature**

**Texas Department of State Health Services
Health Promotion Unit
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Purpose:

Article II of the General Appropriations Act, 2004-2005 Biennium, 78th Legislature, specifies goals for the use of tobacco-cessation or reduction funds and requires that the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), formerly the Texas Department of Health (TDH), report on the agency's progress towards achieving them. The goals specified in Rider 49 are:

- (i) In areas where the state funds tobacco cessation programs at a level of \$3.00 per capita, there should be a demonstrated reduction in underage use of cigarettes, snuff, and smokeless tobacco of 60 percent by the year 2010 by all Texans 22 years and younger.
- (ii) In areas where the state funds tobacco prevention and cessation programs at a level of \$3.00 per capita, the use of cigarettes, snuff and smokeless tobacco by all Texans 22 years and younger should be eliminated by the year 2018.

Background:**FY 2000-2001 Activities**

The 76th Legislature appropriated interest (\$9 million per year) from the \$200 million Permanent Endowment for Tobacco Education and Enforcement to the TDH to prevent tobacco use and promote cessation. Working with eight state university partners, TDH conducted a pilot study in eighteen East Texas communities to evaluate the effectiveness of various combinations and intensities of tobacco prevention programs. In Port Arthur, TDH and its local partners developed and implemented comprehensive programs at a cost of \$3.00 per capita. The per capita cost is calculated for the entire population of the community. The comprehensive program included school/community interventions (including implementation of CDC-recommended school curricula and targeted education efforts through minority community organizations), surveillance and evaluation (including surveys of tens of thousands of students in schools and adults via random dial phone surveys), enhanced law enforcement to reduce illegal sales to minors, intensive media campaigns targeted to youth and teens, and cessation programs (including up to three free sessions of telephone counseling by bilingual, trained counselors).

In other communities, expenditures ranging from \$0.25 to \$2.50 per capita supported lower intensity combinations of the interventions (i.e., not comprehensive). These included a less intensive media campaign, and single-focus community, school, enforcement or cessation programs. For example, Lufkin only received support to improve law enforcement efforts while Texarkana only received support to implement the school curriculum and promote community activities.

The comprehensive tobacco prevention program achieved significant results: a forty percent decline in usage among 6th and 7th graders and a significant increase in cessation among older youth and adults. The results from the communities with the less-intensive

programs did not show a measurable reduction in tobacco usage among either adults or children.

FY 2002-2003 Activities

Additional funding appropriated by the 77th Legislature (a total of \$12.5 million per year) was used to expand the successful \$3.00 per capita comprehensive program beyond its original boundaries to include Harris, Fort Bend, Jefferson (Beaumont/Port Arthur) and Montgomery Counties. These counties account for approximately one-fifth of the Texas population. To implement these programs, TDH contracted with local health departments, Education Service Centers, law enforcement agencies, a media firm for the development of tobacco prevention and cessation messages, voluntary health organizations for telephone cessation counseling, and state institutions of higher education for evaluation studies.

FY 2004-2005 Activities

The 78th Legislature reduced funding for tobacco education and enforcement by more than 50% to approximately \$5.9 million per year. As a result of these budget reductions, in FY 2004-2005 the \$3.00 per capita comprehensive tobacco prevention program area was restricted to the Beaumont and Port Arthur area.

Evaluation:

DSHS/TDH has conducted a number of surveys to evaluate the impact of the comprehensive tobacco prevention and control program on tobacco use. Surveys of more than 150,000 Texas youth enrolled in grades 6 to 12 have been conducted in regions where the comprehensive tobacco prevention program has been implemented since the program began. In addition, DSHS/TDH has conducted multiple telephone surveys of more than 27,000 Texas adults age 18 and older to determine tobacco-use rates. The data obtained through these surveys clearly show success in achieving the Rider 49 goals.

Latest Results:

- Current tobacco use among youth in grades 6-12 decreased from 35% to 21.9% (**a 37.3% reduction**) between 2000 and 2004 in Beaumont and Port Arthur where state funds at a level of \$3.00 per capita have been used to implement the comprehensive tobacco prevention program.
- Current tobacco use among adults age 18-22 decreased from 35.7% to 26.6% (**a 26% reduction**) between 2000 and 2004 in Beaumont and Port Arthur where state funds at a level of \$3.00 per capita have been used to implement the comprehensive tobacco prevention program.
- If the current trends continue, a 60% decrease in current tobacco use among youth in grades 6-12 could be realized by 2007 in Beaumont and Port Arthur. This performance would exceed the 2010 legislative goal.
- If the current trends continue, a 60% decrease in current tobacco use among adults ages 18-22 could be realized by 2010 in Beaumont and Port Arthur. This performance would meet the 2010 legislative goal.

- During FY 2002-2003, funding to implement comprehensive tobacco prevention was increased in Harris County and Beaumont/Port Arthur; however, in FY 2004-2005 funding was decreased in Harris County, but remained level in Beaumont/Port Arthur. A study by the University of Texas School of Public Health and Baylor College of Medicine released in January 2005 shows that during the FY 2002-2003 interval, usage rates declined in both areas, but in the year after funding was decreased in Harris County, sixth grade tobacco use rates ceased to decline in Harris County while continuing to decrease in Beaumont/Port Arthur.

Recommendations:

The above data demonstrate significant progress in achieving the legislated goals and indicate that DSHS is on track to meet the 2010 goals in the comprehensive program area. Further progress towards these goals depends on maintaining efforts at the same level of intensity.

Expansion of the \$3.00 per capita comprehensive tobacco prevention program to other areas of Texas will require additional resources. Should expansion funds be appropriated, it is unknown whether new comprehensive program areas could meet the 2010 and 2018 goals established by Rider 49, and revised goals and timelines should be considered.