



# Raising Tobacco Taxes and Helping Smokers Quit

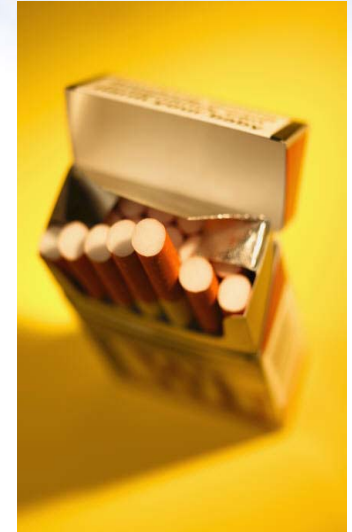
Paul Billings

Vice President, National Policy and Advocacy

*American Lung Association*

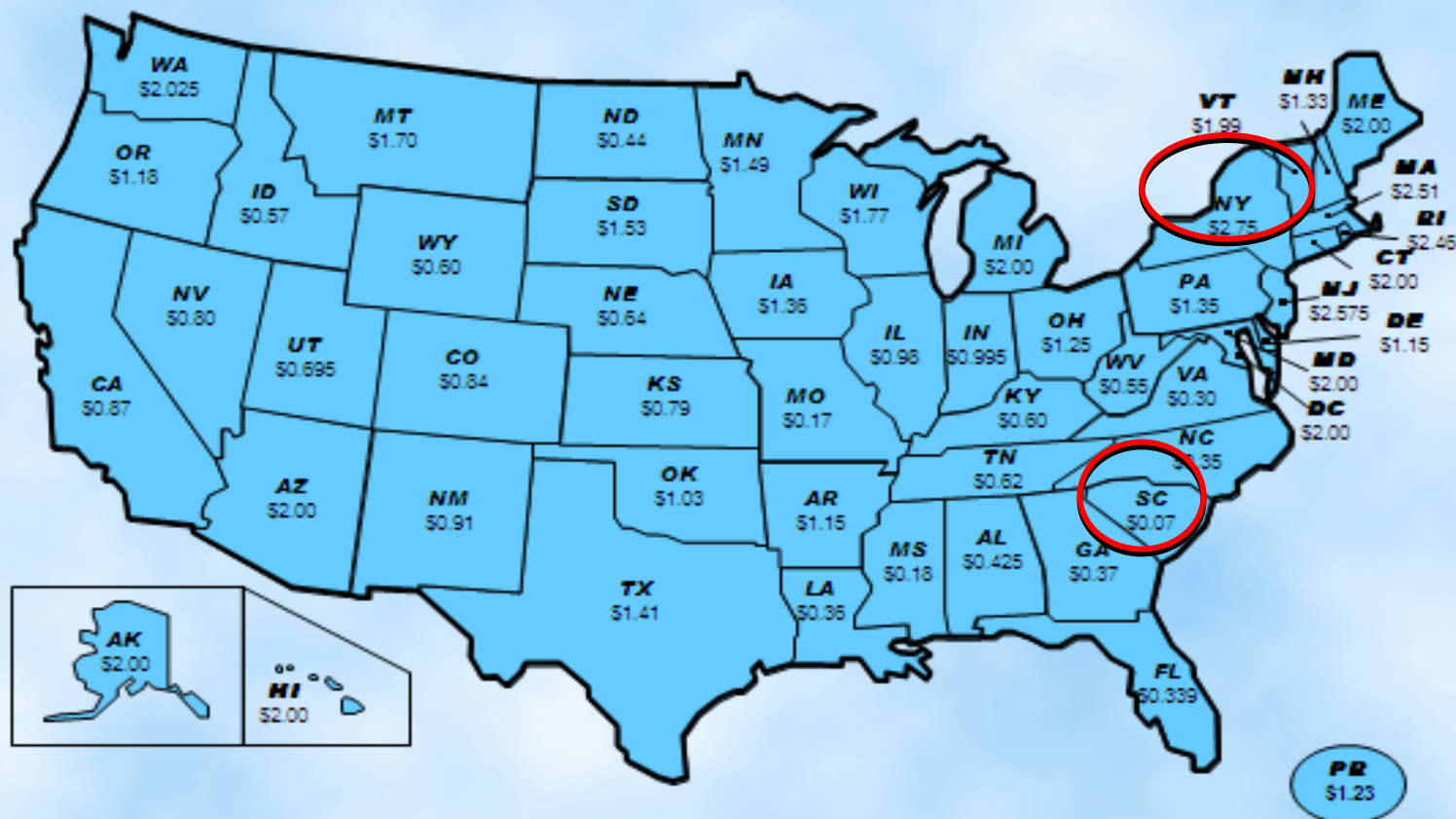
# Children's Health Insurance Program

- Passed in February 2009
- Taxes increased on April 1, 2009
- 62-cent increase in federal cigarette tax
  - Includes *all* tobacco products
- Federal cigarette tax is now \$1.01 per pack



# Map of Current State Excise Taxes on Cigarettes

as of April 1, 2009



Note: The federal excise tax on cigarettes is \$1.01 per pack.

# Current State Proposals

- More than 20 states have active proposals to increase tobacco taxes
- Recent increases:
  - Arkansas - 56 cent increase
  - Kentucky - 30 cent increase
- Proposals:
  - North Carolina - Governor proposed \$1.00 increase in budget
  - South Carolina - 50 cent increase has passed House
  - Rhode Island - \$1.00 increase has passed House
  - Illinois - \$1.00 increase over 2 years passed Senate
  - California - \$1.50 increase introduced in Senate

# Increased Tax → Increased Quitting

Smokers are flooding the lines in a panic over an increase in the tobacco tax.

*The Washington Post*



"I'm going to quit," said Will Hues, 27, smoking a cigarette outside the store. He said prices have gone up so much that "you're out of your mind to pay it."

The [call] center now receives 400 to 500 calls a day, he said, and callers often mention their motivation. "The very first thing they bring up is the cost of cigarettes," Mark said.

THE STATE  
*Journal Register*  
THE OLDEST NEWSPAPER IN ILLINOIS™

 AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION.  
Fighting for Air



## The Good News

Most smokers need help to quit, and there are many ways to help them.

- Medications
- Counseling

All smokers should have access to all of these treatments.

## The Bad News

...they don't.

# Cessation Coverage

- Medicare
  - Covers medications and counseling only for patients who have a condition or take a medication that is worsened by smoking
- Medicaid
  - Not mandatory for states to cover
  - Varies widely state-to-state
  - 7 states have comprehensive coverage
  - 6 states have no coverage

# Private Insurance Coverage

- Smokers who are privately insured (through employer or individual) might have coverage
- Varies company-by-company, plan-by-plan
- Only 1 in 50 US employers offer comprehensive cessation coverage.



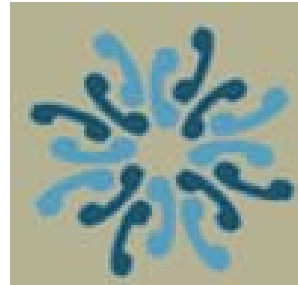
# Quitlines

- Quitline in every state, DC & Puerto Rico



- Resource for everyone, regardless of insurance status

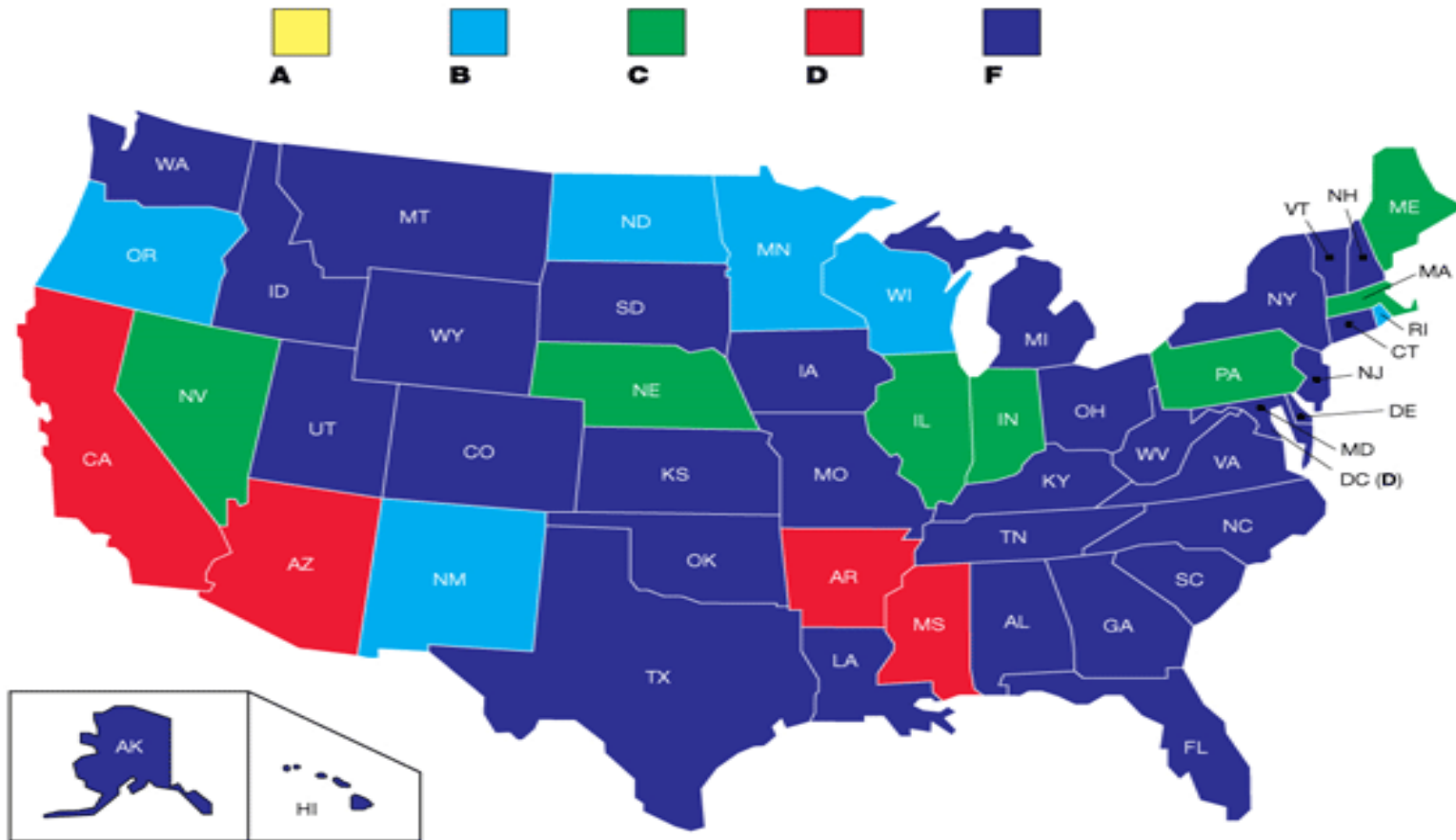
- Most states have seen increases in calls since the beginning of March
  - Average call volume in the states has **more than doubled.**



- Example: Michigan
  - Over **92 thousand** calls in March
  - Almost had to shut down



# State of Tobacco Control: 2008 Cessation Coverage Grades



# Helping Smokers Quit: Resources in Your State

- Quitline: **1-800-QUIT-NOW**
- American Lung Association's **Freedom From Smoking®** and **Not on Tobacco®** programs
  - Call 1-800-LUNG-USA for more info
- [www.ffsonline.org](http://www.ffsonline.org) (Freedom From Smoking online)
- Community & hospital-based programs
- Refer to doctor

# What You Can Do

- Refer constituents who need help quitting to cessation resources in your state
- Include information on quitting smoking in legislative correspondence where appropriate



## State Cessation Coverage

For more information: [www.lungusa.org/cessationcoverage](http://www.lungusa.org/cessationcoverage)



## Arkansas

### Medicaid Coverage

✓ Covered    ✗ Not Covered

Arkansas Medicaid, through its Tobacco Cessation Program, covers:

- |                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| ✓ NRT Gum         | ✓ Varenicline           |
| ✓ NRT Patch       | ✓ Bupropion             |
| ✗ NRT Nasal Spray | ✓ Group Counseling      |
| ✗ NRT Inhaler     | ✓ Individual Counseling |
| ✗ NRT Lozenge     |                         |

Medications are provided free of cost. Two courses of treatment, lasting 93 days each, are covered per year (4 allowed for pregnant women). Prior authorization is required for all medications, and patients are referred to a required counseling program after their first quit attempt.

For more information, please call the Arkansas Medicaid office at 501-682-8501 or 800-482-5431, or visit their website at <http://www.medicaid.state.ar.us>

### State Employee Health Plan Coverage

✓ Covered    ✗ Not Covered

AR Benefits, through the Breathe Program, covers:

- |                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| ✗ NRT Gum         | ✓ Bupropion             |
| ✓ NRT Patch       | ✓ Varenicline           |
| ✗ NRT Nasal Spray | ✗ Group Counseling      |
| ✗ NRT Inhaler     | ✓ Individual Counseling |
| ✗ NRT Lozenge     | ✓ Phone Counseling      |

A 50% co-pay is required for bupropion and varenicline. Patients must be enrolled in the Breathe Program to receive medications.

To enroll in the Breathe Program, please visit [www.corghealth.com/arwellness](http://www.corghealth.com/arwellness). For more information, please call the Arkansas Employee Benefits Division at 877-815-1017, or visit their website at [http://www.state.ar.us/cfa/employee\\_benefits/ebd\\_index.html](http://www.state.ar.us/cfa/employee_benefits/ebd_index.html)

### Quitline

The Arkansas Tobacco Quitline is open 7:00 AM to 2:00 AM (Central Time). You can reach the Quitline by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW.


### American Lung Association Resources

The American Lung Association of Arkansas provides smoking cessation services statewide. Options include Freedom From Smoking® Online, a free program available 24/7 at [www.ffsonline.org](http://www.ffsonline.org) and the American Lung Association's Lung Helpline (800-LUNG-USA). For further information, please call 870-489-1470 or visit us online at [www.breathehealthy.org](http://www.breathehealthy.org).

**State specific  
information**

# In Your Packets

- State-specific info on cessation coverage and resources (not in folders, available at table)
- Sample Newsletter insert
- 1-pager on American Lung Association quit-smoking programs
- Cessation ads from different states
- Washington Post article on tax increase
- *Helping Smokers Quit* report (not in folders, available at table)
- Quit Smoking for Life Act of 2009



We will breathe easier when the air in every  
American community is clean and healthy.

We will breathe easier when people are free from the addictive  
grip of cigarettes and the debilitating effects of lung disease.

We will breathe easier when the air in our public spaces and  
workplaces is clear of secondhand smoke.

We will breathe easier when children no longer  
battle airborne poisons or fear an asthma attack.

***Until then, we are fighting for air.***