



SC Tobacco Tax Increase

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- AHEC – Midlands
- Tobacco Collaborative- American Heart Assoc., American Cancer Society, American Lung Assoc. and other health organizations

Toll of Tobacco on SC's

- High school students who smoke: 36.0%
(Girls: 34.2% Boys: 37.7%)
- Children under 18 who try tobacco: 23,200
- Addition kids who become new smokers each year: 10,600
- Packs of cigarettes bought or smoked each year: 10,600
- Kids exposed to second hand smoke at home: 240,000
- Adults who smoke: 26.6%

Deaths in SC from smoking

- Annual deaths of adults from their own smoking: 5,900
- Annual deaths from others' smoking: 630 to 1,130
- Children alive today who will die from smoking (at current trends): 90,000

Tobacco Related Monetary Costs in SC

- Annual health care expenditures caused by tobacco use: \$854 million
- Medicaid payments caused by tobacco use: \$307 million
- Smoking caused productivity losses: \$1.67 million
- Smoking caused health and productivity cost per pack sold: \$6.38

Government Policies for Tobacco

- Prevention spending: \$0.0 million
[National rank: 51st (once again at bottom)]
- Cigarette tax per pack: \$0.07 (National rank: 48th)

Aims

- Long term – Tax increase on tobacco
- Short term – Aid the tobacco collaborative with information that they may use to help push through a bill
- The community (i.e..the State) supports this aim by evidence that only 26.6% of SC smoke vs. 73.4% that don't
- In one poll 86% of citizens support the bill
- No one wants to pay for the choices of others (i.e.. Increased health care cost of smokers)

Identified measures

- Long-term – tax will be passed (unable to measured at this time)
- Short-term – change the votes of politicians
- Short-term – create a poll for use by the collaborative
- Short-term – Aid in recruiting members from the various districts

Possible changes for improvement

- Create a poll of the current votes of politicians
 - Speak at various Grass root meetings
 - Drivers:
 - Preceptor enthusiastic about the idea
 - Pursuit of protecting the health of the public
 - Barriers:
 - Politicians
 - Politicians
 - Politicians
 - Collaborative is a multiple head group.
- Sometimes, one is not 100% aware of the other.

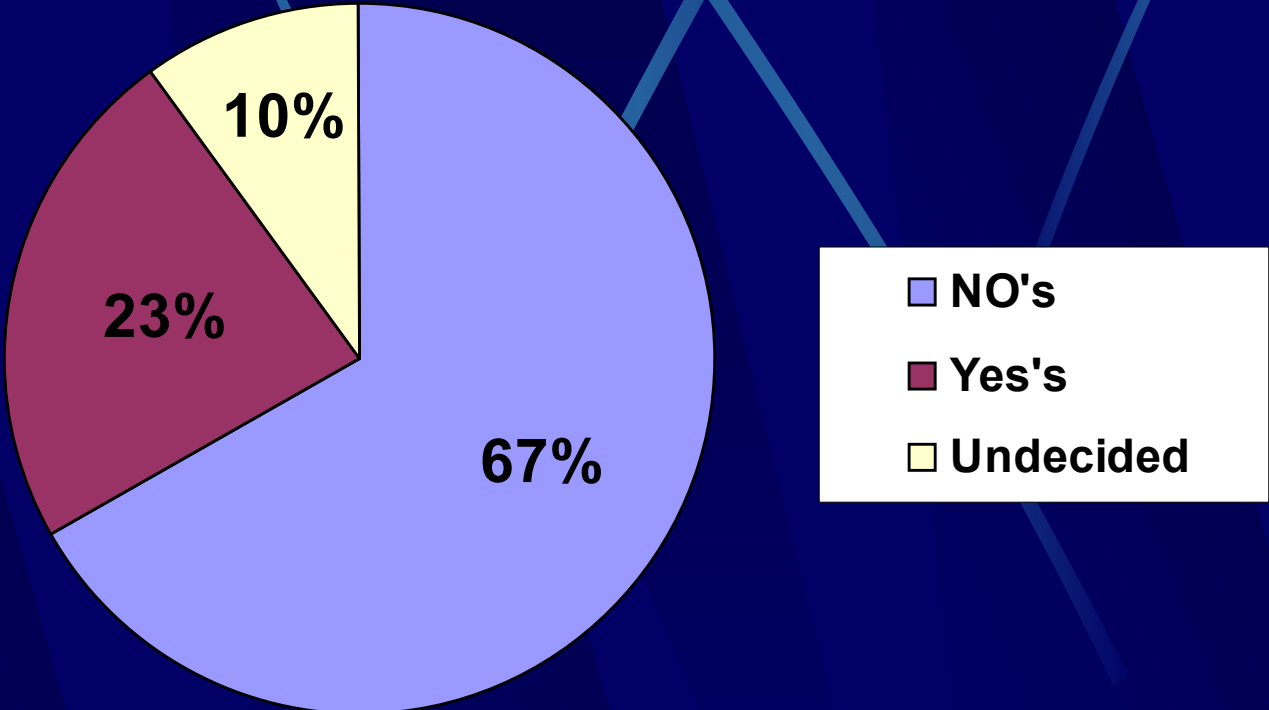
Intervention

- Multiple arm intervention
- Spoke at grass root meetings trying to gain support from community
- Letter to the editor of Charleston's *Post and Courier*
- Polled state Representatives to discover how they would vote if on a bill for a tax on tobacco products this year

Data Collection

- The House of Representative and Senate legislator's info is public access
- A spreadsheet of legislators names, work address, and work numbers was created by myself for Collaborative use
- Personnel calls were made by myself to all Representatives. Few representatives were readily available; so messages were left with hope they would call back-----a portion did

Poll of the Current Vote in the House of Representatives



Lessons Learned

- To pass a bill takes time, patience, and years of dedications
- Trying to convince politicians to vote on a bill that will save money and protect the health of the citizens they represent is difficult unless it affects them directly
- Trying to rally help from the public (even if they support the cause) is difficult unless it is making a strong impact them
- We, the future and current health care providers need to make a more prominent role in the political machine because politics does affect us and our patients

Steps for the future

- Polling the senators to see the chances of passing a bill in the Senate
- Multiple future grass root meetings to organize help for the bill in the future
- Help is needed in trying to recruit the press for attendance of the Tobacco Collaborative meetings
- Help is needed in forming rally of grass root members at the state house