



Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Clarke

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning **Request for State Action - Healthy Maryland Initiative**

FOR the purpose of expressing support for increasing the state cigarette tax by \$1 per pack, along with a similar increase to the tax on other tobacco products, with the revenue from these tax increases to fund: the state tobacco control program; the state health improvement process and other community based health initiatives including those that address childhood obesity or long term care for seniors; and improved access to health care services for Maryland families.

WHEREAS, Over the last decade Maryland's smoking rate has declined by 32%, double the national average, saving over 70,000 people from preventable tobacco caused deaths and hundreds of millions of dollars in health care costs, in large part as a result of three tobacco tax increases.

WHEREAS, Tobacco still kills tens of thousands of Marylanders, costing us hundreds of millions of dollars in health care costs.

WHEREAS, Maryland has not raised its tax on non cigarette tobacco products since 1999, and the use of cigars and smokeless tobacco products, especially by children and teens, has increased during the last decade.

WHEREAS, While Maryland has made significant progress in expanding health care in recent years, hundreds of thousands of Marylanders remain uninsured or underinsured. In addition, the significant savings that could be achieved through community based initiatives have not been realized due to lack of implementation funding.

WHEREAS, Maryland needs to move forward in developing community based options, strengthening its safety net, and improving service delivery in order to fully utilize the opportunities presented by the state health improvement process and federal health care reform.

WHEREAS, Lack of additional funding for health care coverage, public health initiatives, and community services will mean that uninsured and underinsured people will continue to go to the hospital for care which results in higher

insurance premiums for everyone.

WHEREAS, Raising the state's tobacco tax by \$1.00 per pack for cigarettes with a comparable increase for other tobacco products will raise necessary funds in addition to dramatically reducing teen and adult tobacco use, which in turn saves lives and state health care costs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, that the Council supports increasing the state cigarette tax by \$1 per pack, along with a similar increase to the tax on other tobacco products, with the revenue from these tax increases to fund: the state tobacco control program; the state health improvement process and other community based health initiatives including those that address childhood obesity or long term care for seniors; and improved access to health care services for Maryland families.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Governor, the Honorable Chairs and Members of the Baltimore City Senate and House Delegations to the 2012 Session of the Maryland General Assembly, the Mayor, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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