



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release: 1 May 2014

HEALTH COALITION WELCOMES FIRST ONTARIO TOBACCO TAX INCREASE SINCE 2006

Combined with recent federal tax increase, Ontario levy will help reduce smoking

Toronto – A major health coalition is applauding the provincial government’s first tobacco excise tax increase in 8 years in today’s 2014 provincial Budget.

“We strongly support the government’s decision to increase tobacco taxes today, a measure that research shows is the single most effective intervention to reduce the use of tobacco industry products,” said Michael Perley, Director of the Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco.

“Tobacco tax increases are especially effective at reducing smoking among youth, and help counteract the effect of the tobacco industry’s marketing of discount cigarettes, which typically sell for up to \$20/carton less than premium brands.”

Perley noted that while tobacco control legislative measures currently being debated by MPPs are stalled, the tax increase will go ahead immediately.

“The Minister’s immediate implementation of the \$3.25/carton tax increase means that, combined with last February’s federal tax increase, the per carton price of cigarettes in Ontario will have increased by over \$7.25 in less than 3 months. The impact of the two increases combined on smoking prevalence should be significant.”

“While we are frustrated that MPPs have not approved the proposed ban on flavoured products in Bill 131, we are delighted tobacco taxes are finally set on an upward course in Ontario, matching the most recent federal and other provincial increases.”

“We’ve already heard complaints from the tobacco industry and its retail allies about tax increases and their alleged effect on the contraband market,” Perley went on to say. “Tobacco industry data shows that contraband has decreased significantly during the last several years in Canada. The provincial government is right to ignore the complaints of the industry and its retail allies, and focus instead on reducing and preventing the disease and death caused by the industry’s products.”

Nearly 13,000 Ontarians die every year from the effects of tobacco industry products, and related health care costs the provincial government nearly \$2 billion each year, about double its projected tax revenue before today’s increase.

The Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco was founded in 1992 by the Canadian Cancer Society (Ontario Division), the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, the Non-Smokers' Rights Association, and the Ontario Medical Association to promote comprehensive tobacco control in Ontario.

— 30 —

For more:

Michael Perley
Cell: 416-709-9075
Email: michael.perley@oma.org

Founding Agencies

Canadian Cancer Society
Ontario Division

Heart and Stroke
Foundation of Ontario

Non-Smokers'
Rights Association

Ontario Medical Association

Supporting Agencies

Association of Local
Public Health Agencies

Cancer Care Ontario

Ontario Association of
Children's Aid Societies

Ontario Association of
Naturopathic Doctors

Ontario Federation of Home
and School Associations

Ontario Physical and Health
Education Association

Ontario Public Health
Association

Physicians for a
Smoke-Free Canada

Registered Nurses
Association of Ontario

The Ontario College
of Family Physicians

150 Bloor Street West
Suite 900
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 3C1

t: 416.340.2992
f: 416.340.2995
email: ocata@oma.org
www.ocata.org