

Jan. 25, 2018

# THE STATE OF TOBACCO CONTROL IN FLORIDA

Statement from the Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida



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**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – On Jan. 24, the American Lung Association released the results of its annual report, “State of Tobacco Control 2018,” which monitors federal and state progress on key tobacco-related policies. The American Lung Association’s formula for grades is largely based on funding allocations recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This year’s report reinforces some key points that make it clear sustained funding for Tobacco Free Florida is essential to make a significant impact in reducing tobacco use in the state.

In 2006, Florida voters overwhelmingly approved a constitutional amendment that called for reinstating a tobacco education and use prevention program. The Florida Department of Health’s Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida is funded by the settlement agreement that Florida won against tobacco companies in 1997, to compensate the state for past and future treatment of tobacco users. Tobacco Free Florida receives an amount equal to 15 percent of the funds paid to Florida in 2005 under the tobacco settlement, to ensure a comprehensive and consistent program is effectively implemented and evaluated per CDC’s “Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs.”

Despite operating at about one-third of CDC’s recommended level of funding, Tobacco Free Florida implements a comprehensive prevention, cessation and education program that includes community interventions, mass-reach health interventions and cessation interventions. The constitutional amendment is a positive and unique attribute Florida boasts when compared with other states, and allows for each of the program areas listed above to be successful.

Tobacco Free Florida’s positive impact is proven in numbers:

- In 2006, the adult smoking rate was 21.0 percent. In 2016, it stood at 15.5 percent – the lowest it has ever been.<sup>1,2</sup>
- Fewer young people have started smoking since Tobacco Free Florida was created. The youth smoking rate has decreased from 10.6 percent in 2006 to 2.5 percent in 2017 – a 76 percent decrease.<sup>3,4</sup>
- Tobacco Free Florida has also saved the state \$17.7 billion in smoking-related healthcare costs, between 2007 and 2015. If the adult smoking rate continues to decline as expected, the state will continue to save not only lives, but also billions of dollars.<sup>5</sup>

The program's sustained success is necessary, particularly at a time when the tobacco industry is introducing new products targeting our youth. The Bureau is confident that the program will continue its positive momentum, helping tobacco users quit, preventing youth from starting and helping to protect more Floridians from the dangers of secondhand smoke.

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### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.FloridaHealth.gov](#).

### **About Tobacco Free Florida**

The department's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Since 2007, more than 188,000 Floridians have successfully quit, using one of Tobacco Free Florida's free tools and services. To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way services, visit [www.tobaccofreeflorida.com](#) or follow the campaign on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida](#) or on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data, Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Mann, Nathan M, Nonnemaker, James M., Thompson, Jesse. "Smoking-Attributable Health Care Costs in Florida and Potential Health Care Cost Savings Associated with Reductions in Adult Smoking Prevalence." 2016.