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A service of
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To: New Jersey Legislators and Leadership
From: Karen Blumenfeld, Esq., Executive Director
Date: May 14, 2009

**Re: -Upsurge in requests for New Jersey smoking cessation services.
-Harvard study finds smoking is lead cause of death among men (1 in 5).
-New York increases cigarette retail licensing fees from \$100 up to \$5,000.
-New Jersey's fee is only \$50 (raising it to \$1,000 could raise \$11 million in revenues).
-New Jersey has NO licensing fees for other types of tobacco.
-New Jersey state cigarette tax drops to 4th highest, on July 1.**

The media is reporting on the immediate and long-term need to increase smoking cessation services in New Jersey. The higher federal tobacco taxes that took effect on April 1, resulted in smokers reaching out for help to quit. The State originally funded 15 quit centers; now only 7 quit centers are state-funded, due to yearly budget cuts to the state's Comprehensive Tobacco Control Program (CTCP). Recent related news clips are attached:

- May 8, 2009 Star-Ledger front page article on the increased request for smoking cessation services by smokers, due to recent federal tax increases. CTCP budget cuts are planned, even though smokers who quit save New Jersey billions of dollars in healthcare costs.
- May 5, 2009 Star-Ledger Op-Ed, by Fred M. Jacobs, MD, JD, (former Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, and current President of GASP) on the need to provide sufficient smoking cessation services for smokers, and fund CTCP.
- March 21, 2009 Star-Ledger article on the need for smoking cessation programs. 75% of New Jersey's 1.15 million smokers want to quit, but only 3% can do so without help.
- April 27 press release, Harvard School of Public Health, that smoking is responsible for 467,000 deaths in the U.S. and is the leading cause of death among men in the U.S. (1 in 5 deaths).

New York State's approved budget for the upcoming fiscal year increases the cigarette retail licensing fee from \$100, up to \$5,000 (takes effect September 1). New York's fee had not increased for 19 years. **New Jersey's cigarette retail licensing fee is only \$50; it has not increased in 12 years, and generates only \$500,000 (NJSA 54:40A-4). Raising New Jersey's cigarette retail licensing fee to \$1,000 could raise more than \$11 million.** New Jersey's other cigarette licensing fees are also low, and New Jersey has no licensing fees related to selling other types of tobacco (cigars, little cigars, chew, etc). New Jersey legislative bills A564, S219 and S938 require licenses to conduct business in other tobacco products. Attached are:

- Excerpts from New York State 2009-10 Enacted Budget Financial Plan, dated April 28, 2009 on increased retail licensing fee to sell cigarettes.
- GASP proposal outlining increased cigarette licensing fees; estimated to raise revenue by more than \$13 million, to fund CTCP.

On July 1, New Jersey cigarette tax rate drops to 4th highest in the nation. It is \$2.58/pack. A 47-cent tax increase would create \$60 million in revenues, and save \$500 million in health savings. A March 2009 Quinnipiac University poll showed 75% of New Jerseyans support a New Jersey cigarette tax increase. The Poll's key findings are attached.