

## HOOSIER FAITH AND HEALTH COALITION RESOLUTION

WHEREAS: As people of faith, we believe that the body is a spiritual temple, we therefore have an essential interest in reducing the toll of tobacco, particularly among children and youth who are targeted by the tobacco industry.

WHEREAS: Every year more than 19,000 Hoosier children become addicted to tobacco, of whom a third will die prematurely because of this addiction. This year more than 10,000 Hoosiers will die from tobacco use and thousands more will suffer from illness and health problems caused by smoking and secondhand smoke. Smoking-caused health problems cost Indiana a total of more than \$1.6 billion per year, including more than \$380 million paid for by the state Medicaid program with taxpayer dollars.

WHEREAS: Indiana settled its lawsuit against the major tobacco companies to reduce tobacco's toll in Indiana, and the Master Settlement Agreement has the stated goal of providing "significant funding for the advancement of public health and the implementation of important tobacco-related public health measures."

WHEREAS: Indiana receives more than \$125 million in settlement payments each year from the tobacco companies, and the Indiana Legislature has created the Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Agency (ITPC) to reduce tobacco-caused death and disease, funding it at \$32.5 million per year.

WHEREAS: Experiences from other states indicate that adequately funded state tobacco-prevention programs reduce smoking-caused costs by two or three dollars for every dollar the state allocates to them – and smoking among Indiana high school students dropped from 32% in 2000, before the ITPC began its work, to 23% in 2002.

WHEREAS: In 2003, the Indiana Legislature cut ITPC funding by more than two-thirds, breaking the promise of the Master Settlement and leaving Indiana without adequate funding to continue reducing the toll of tobacco in the State.

WHEREAS: Indiana also has weak smoke-free laws and below-average tobacco tax rates, and needs to do more to keep tobacco products out of the reach of kids.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED: That the undersigned faith organization:

1. Calls upon all organizations and individuals concerned with children or the health of all Hoosiers to support expanded public and private efforts to reduce tobacco use; and
2. Endorses a comprehensive state strategy to prevent and reduce tobacco use and its harms, especially among children – including the immediate restoration of state funding to the ITPC and its sustained funding at no lower than the minimum levels recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Members \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please Return to the Hoosier Faith and Health Coalition, care of Aida McCammon, 445 N. Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 800, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204. Fax Number: (317) 472-1056 Phone Number: (317) 472-1055