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House Committee on Taxation  
Representative Marvin KleeB, Chair  
Representative Gene Suellentrop, Vice Chair  
Representative Tom Sawyer, Ranking Minority

**RE: HB 2306 – Relating to taxation of cigarettes and tobacco products**  
Reagan Cussimano, Government Relations Director – Kansas  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

Chairman KleeB and Members of the Committee,

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (“ACS CAN”) is the advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society (the “Society”). The Society is a nationwide, community-based, voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives and diminishing suffering from cancer, through research, education, advocacy, and service.

Increasing tobacco taxes is an evidence-based policy approach to accomplishing the critical public health goals of reducing smoking-related death and disease. Tobacco taxes are also a powerful economic tool resulting in large savings in health care costs. That’s why forty-seven states and the District of Columbia have increased their cigarette taxes since 2002; some states more than once. In 2013, three states including Massachusetts, Minnesota and Oregon increased their cigarette taxes and in 2014, Vermont, approved legislation increasing their cigarette tax. In addition, it is a popular one. Poll results from December 2013 survey show that majority of Kansas voters favor increasing the state tobacco tax by \$1.50. The poll, done by Public Opinion Strategies, was completed among 500 likely voters in Kansas.

The public health benefits from reduced smoking are reason enough to support the increase in the cigarette tax. However, the economic benefits are also vitally important--especially given the current financial condition faced by the State. A \$1.50 increase would generate just under \$72 million, with almost an additional \$9 million when the rate of taxation on other tobacco products is increased from 10 to 25 percent of wholesale. But more importantly, this increase would translate into 25,400 fewer Kansas kids becoming addicted to cigarettes, 25,800 current adult smokers would quit, and 14,900 Kansas lives would be saved.

Smoking costs Kansas \$1 billion annually in direct expenses for smoking-related healthcare, including \$237 million in Medicaid expenditures. By raising the tobacco tax we can attack the \$825 per household that people from our state are forced to spend on tobacco related costs and save taxpayers money. This is based on the simple idea, backed up by years of evidence, that when you raise taxes on tobacco you encourage current smokers to quit and discourage young people from starting. This is a reasonable means to recover a portion of the cost borne by the state due to cigarette use.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue. Please feel free to contact me directly if I can provide any additional information or if you have any questions.