



Maine Medical  
Association



**State of Maine | 132nd Legislature  
Joint Standing Committee on Taxation and  
Committee on Appropriation and Financial Affairs**

**Testimony of Madeleine DesFosses on behalf of the Maine Chapter of the American  
Academy of Pediatrics, Maine Medical Association, and Maine Osteopathic Association  
February 3, 2025**

**In Support of:  
LD 210, Language Part "E"**

Good afternoon, Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation and the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,

My name is Madeleine DesFosses, and I am testifying on behalf of my organization, the Maine Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (Maine AAP), as well as the Maine Medical Association and Maine Osteopathic Association. Our organizations are dedicated to promoting and protecting the health of Maine children and adults. Together, we ask for your support on the inclusion of Language Part "E" in the biennial budget as a critical public health measure to reduce tobacco use, protect our youth, and lessen the burden of tobacco-related disease on our healthcare system.

The Maine AAP, MMA, and MOA have over 5,000 members across the state of Maine. Our members are physicians who see firsthand the devastating consequences of tobacco use and nicotine addiction on their patients. Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death in Maine, and we must implement every tool available to reduce the current number of adult tobacco users, and help prevent young people from becoming the next generation of tobacco users. Increasing the tobacco tax is one of the most effective strategies to achieve this goal.

Raising the price of tobacco products discourages youth initiation and supports adult cessation. In Maine, the proposed \$1 increase per pack of cigarettes alone is estimated to prevent 700 youth from becoming smokers as adults, encourage 3,000 adults to quit, and prevent 900 premature smoking-related deaths. (Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids). Maine's current tobacco tax is lower than the national average, making tobacco more accessible and affordable to young people. With a \$1 increase, we will start to see public health benefits and reduced tobacco use, but even just a slightly higher increased tax would elevate these benefits and impact the lives of many more Mainers. As physicians, our members are committed to preventing disease rather than just treating it. Increasing Maine's tobacco tax is a proven public health intervention that will protect Maine children, reduce the impact of tobacco-related illness on families, communities,

and the healthcare system, and save lives. We urge you to support this measure and help to create a healthier Maine.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have to the best of my ability.

Madeleine DesFosses

Advocacy and Public Health Manager, Maine AAP