



*The Maryland State Medical Society*

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## **MEDCHI TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT RAISING TOBACCO TAX**

BALTIMORE, October 22, 2012 – MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, in conjunction with Health Care For All! Coalition and other various other public health organizations, will be holding a press conference on Wednesday, October 24, at Mergenthaler Vocational-Technical High School (Mervo), in Baltimore City, in an effort to continue to reduce the number of Maryland citizens, specifically youth, from using non-cigarette tobacco products. They also want to continue to increase awareness about the health risks associated with tobacco use and how an increase in taxes will help reduce smoking and fund public health programs.

A tax on cigars and other tobacco products had not been changed since 1999. Governor O'Malley signed a bill into law on May 22, 2012 to raise the state excise tax on "other tobacco products" (OTP) and on July 1 the tax rate increased from 15% to 30% of the wholesale price. The tax on non-premium cigar products increased from 15% to 70% of the wholesale price. President of MedChi, Dr. Brian Avin, stated "We are hopeful that this tax increase will continue to discourage Maryland residents from using these dangerous tobacco products and decrease how many lives are taken each year from using these products."

### About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org).