



*The Maryland State Medical Society*

**News: For Immediate Release**

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## **MEDCHI TO CONTINUE TO WORK TOWARDS REDUCING SMOKING AND EXPANDING HEALTHCARE IN MARYLAND**

BALTIMORE, October 28, 2013 – MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, in conjunction with Health Care For All! Coalition and other various public health organizations, will be holding a press conference on Wednesday, October 30, in an effort to continue to reduce smoking and expand healthcare in Maryland. The event will be held at the MedChi building, 1211 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, 21202, at 11:00 a.m.

Since MedChi first started its efforts in increasing the tobacco tax the State of Maryland has seen many benefits. Youth smoking rates dropped by more than 29 percent in two years; adult smoking rates dropped by about 13 percent; cigarette tax revenues increased while cigarette pack sales decreased.

While the cigarette tax increase in Maryland did what it was expected to do, the severe cut in funding for the state Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Program caused the downward trend in smoking to reverse slightly. MedChi, and several other public health organizations, feel that Maryland should enact another \$1.00 increase in its tobacco tax to build on the success of the 2008 tax increase.

Dr. Brian Avin, Immediate Past President of MedChi, states “an additional tobacco tax increase will likely generate benefits similar to the last increase, decreasing tobacco caused illness and death in young people and adults resulting in improved health and substantial health care cost savings for The State of Maryland. The new revenues will be used to ensure that the tobacco control program is funded at levels more consistent with CDC recommendations and to fund other critical health care and public health needs.”

### 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).