



MOTAC PLATFORM STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Metropolitan Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition is to prevent/reduce tobacco use and the accompanying health and economic consequences in the Omaha area via prevention through public policy and education by an effective community coalition. Because of this mission, MOTAC supports the following platform agenda.

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION

- Counter-Advertising

MOTAC supports funding for effective counter-advertising strategies.

- Media Literacy

MOTAC supports funding of efforts to educate the public on analyzing media messages so that they are less susceptible to advertising efforts aimed at them by tobacco companies.

- Tobacco Advertising/Marketing and Promotions

MOTAC supports efforts to curb tobacco advertising, marketing, and promotions. This includes advertising promotions in retail stores as well as advertising in magazines, on clothing, internet-based advertising, and other venues. MOTAC believes that storefronts should be free from tobacco advertisements and supports legislation to restrict such advertising.

MOTAC opposes any form of free dispensing of tobacco products and supports any legislation that restricts the free distribution of samples.

MOTAC opposes events held for the primary purpose or secondary purpose of promoting tobacco products including but not limited to “bar nights,” “club nights,” “hip hop” parties, concerts, and rodeos. MOTAC supports legislation to restrict such activities.

MOTAC encourages all schools to adopt policies prohibiting the use of magazines, which include tobacco advertising.

- Tobacco Sponsorship

MOTAC encourages all businesses, community organizations, and other groups not to accept sponsorships from the tobacco industry or its affiliates and to find alternative means of sponsorship for events, programs, and festivals.

ALTERNATIVE TOBACCO PRODUCTS

- Bidis and Clove/Herbal Cigarettes

MOTAC believes alternative tobacco products should not be marketed as safe.

Bidis are small, thin, candy-flavored cigarettes from India that are wrapped in a leaf, tapered at both ends and tied with a string. Although these cigarettes are marketed to young people as safer than tobacco cigarettes, MOTAC notes the fact that bidis produce more than three times the carbon monoxide and nicotine and about five times the amount of tar as regular cigarettes.

MOTAC affirms the position of the American Medical Association that concluded that “clove cigarettes are tobacco products flavored with cloves. Therefore, they possess all the hazards associated with smoking.”

MOTAC supports restrictions on alternative tobacco products, which include but are not limited to bidis, clove, and herbal cigarettes.

- Hookah

Hookah smoking is just as dangerous as cigarette smoking. Hookah smoke contains significant quantities of the same chemicals that make cigarette smoke harmful. In addition, hookah smoke contains the same cancer-causing particulates found in secondhand smoke, and 100 times the amount of lead as in regular cigarettes. MOTAC supports legislation to ban Hookah cafes from our community.

CESSATION

- Insurance Coverage for Cessation Services

MOTAC supports inclusion of evidence-based counseling and medications for tobacco cessation in benefits provided to all federal and state beneficiaries and in all federally-funded healthcare programs.

MOTAC challenges all insurers, employers, and purchasers that pay for or provide health coverage to include barrier-free coverage for evidence-based tobacco dependence treatment (counseling and pharmacology) as part of the basic benefits package offered to all individuals and groups seeking insurance coverage.

- Quitline

MOTAC supports funding to establish a state Quitline that will provide universal access to evidence-based counseling and medications for tobacco cessation.

CLEAN AIR

- Clean Indoor Air

MOTAC believes that everyone has the right to breathe clean, smoke-free air. Therefore, MOTAC supports comprehensive smoke-free policies that significantly improve public health of employees, service workers and patron by providing maximum protection from secondhand smoke in all places open to the public and in places of employment including all educational and healthcare settings. These policies treat all businesses fairly by creating a level playing field.

Furthermore, MOTAC supports all local communities and the State in passing and enforcing local ordinances and other policies that prohibit smoking in all public places and workplaces.

- Smoke-Free Apartments and Condominiums

MOTAC encourages all property owners, property managers, and homeowners' associations to adopt smoke-free policies.

- Smoke-Free Daycares

MOTAC supports legislation requiring all licensed childcare providers to provide a smoke-free environment indoors, on their grounds and in their vehicles. MOTAC encourages all non-licensed daycare providers to adopt the same policies.

- Smoke-Free Foster Homes

MOTAC supports prohibiting smoking in a family foster home where a foster child is living and prohibiting foster parents from smoking in their private vehicles.

- Smoke-Free Meeting Facilities

MOTAC encourages all groups to adopt resolutions that all meetings and official events be held or attended only in smoke-free facilities.

- Tobacco-Free School Campuses

MOTAC supports policies prohibiting the use of any tobacco product by any student, staff, parent, or community member on all school grounds, in any school buildings, or any school vehicles. This includes all pre-kindergarten through grade 12 public, private, and parochial schools.

- Smoke Free Airports

MOTAC supports 100% smoke free airports.

- Tobacco-Free Parks and Recreational Areas

MOTAC supports policies that prohibit using any tobacco products in public parks and recreational areas.

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS

- Components of Comprehensive Programs

MOTAC supports that the funding for the state comprehensive program follow the CDC's Practices For Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs which provides states with recommended components and funding levels for effective state-based programs to prevent and reduce tobacco use, eliminate the public's exposure to secondhand smoke, and identify and eliminate disparities related to tobacco use and its effects among different population groups. Components should follow the evidence-based guide to plan and establish effective tobacco control programs to prevent and reduce tobacco use.

The nine evidence-based components of an effective comprehensive program includes: community programs, chronic disease programs (e.g., heart disease prevention, cancer registries) to reduce the burden of tobacco-related disease, school programs, enforcement of existing policies, statewide programs, counter-marketing, cessation programs, surveillance and evaluation, and administration and management.

- Funding

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended that Nebraska spend \$13.8 million to \$31.8 million each year on tobacco prevention and control programs. MOTAC believes that the state legislature should appropriate the CDC recommended level of funding to comprehensive tobacco control programming.

EDUCATION

- Assessment

MOTAC supports using "Healthy People 2010" to establish priorities. MOTAC encourages the use of data to set specific targets and goals, encourages use of State surveys like BRFSS, YRBSS,

PedNSS, PNSS, etc., to set state and local baseline estimates, and recommends the collection of more data on all disparities including ethnic/racial groups, low SES groups, GLTB communities, and women. In addition, MOTAC promotes methods to compare state data to national data.

- Tobacco Education/Prevention Curriculum

MOTAC advocates for mandatory evidence based tobacco control education.

ENFORCEMENT

- Enforcement of Existing Laws

MOTAC supports enforcement of the Nebraska Clean Indoor Air Act (NCIAA).

FINANCIAL

- Priority Populations

MOTAC supports federal, state, and local policies that lead to systematic changes using data and/or other sources to identify and prioritize groups with significantly higher tobacco use, exposure to secondhand smoke, and those that suffer the most health consequences of tobacco. Populations identified with tobacco disparities in the United States includes those age 18–24; low socio economic status; women; lesbians, gays, bisexual/transgender groups; Latinos; African Americans; Asian and Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans. These groups are identified as “priority” populations.

MOTAC supports strategic investments to eliminate disparities amongst “priority” populations by planning and decision-making, capacity and infrastructure building, funding precedents, services, and comprehensive initiatives.

- Divestment

MOTAC encourages all businesses and other organizations to divest from tobacco funds. MOTAC also supports socially responsible investing.

- Insurance

MOTAC supports reduced insurance premiums for non-smokers.

- Tobacco Taxes

MOTAC supports a significant increase in Nebraska's cigarette tax and taxes on other forms of tobacco.

- Use of Tobacco Revenue

MOTAC asserts that a portion of tobacco revenue from both taxes and the Master Settlement Agreement should be used to enhance a comprehensive tobacco prevention plan, including funding of tobacco prevention, education, enforcement, and cessation programs.

LEGAL ISSUES

- International Trade Agreements

MOTAC opposes international trade agreements that include opening up markets for tobacco products and consumption.

- Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Regulation

MOTAC supports a strong FDA tobacco regulation bill that protects public health.

- Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC)

The FCTC is a legally binding treaty, which was negotiated by the 192 member states of the World Health Organization (WHO). Key provisions in the treaty encourage countries to enact comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship; obligate the placement of rotating health warnings on tobacco packaging that cover at least 30 percent (but ideally 50 percent or more) of the principal display areas and can include pictures or pictograms; ban the use of misleading and deceptive terms such as "light" and "mild"; protect citizens from exposure to tobacco smoke in workplaces, public transport and indoor public places; combat smuggling, including the placing of final destination markings on packs; and increase tobacco taxes.

MOTAC encourages that the United States' Senate ratify this treaty.

- Preemption

Preemption is legislative language that removes local control of tobacco prevention laws by stating that no local community can pass legislation stronger than that of the state. This principle also applies to federal versus state. MOTAC strongly opposes any type of preemption on tobacco issues.

YOUTH ACCESS

- Minimum Age

MOTAC supports raising the minimum age for purchase of tobacco products to age 21.

- Product Placement

MOTAC supports legislation banning minors' direct access to tobacco products. Direct access should be limited by banning "self-service" and countertop access of cigarettes, snuff, chewing tobacco, and other tobacco products. Purchasers would have to request tobacco products from a clerk who would then get the products for the purchaser.

- Sales to Minors

MOTAC supports utilizing penalties to license holders for tobacco sales to minors including fines, temporary suspension, and ultimate revocation of the right to sell tobacco for retailers who are repeat violators.

- Tobacco Licenses

Local control of tobacco licenses is limited in Nebraska. MOTAC supports local efforts to create new city and/or countywide ordinances and regulations for a new locally issued and controlled license to sell tobacco.

Counties and communities are preempted from suspending licenses of tobacco retailers. MOTAC supports statewide legislation that would allow counties and municipalities the discretion of control

over licenses. MOTAC also supports statewide legislation to raise the statewide license cost to fund ongoing enforcement efforts. MOTAC supports the establishment of a statewide registry to report all tobacco licenses.

- Tobacco Internet and Mail Order Sales

MOTAC supports state policy to eliminate internet and mail order sales of tobacco to minors and assure collection of state excise taxes of internet or mail order sales.

OTHER RELATED ISSUES

- Voter Registration

MOTAC supports increased voter registration and “get out the vote” efforts.

- Fire-Safe Cigarettes

MOTAC supports legislation to require cigarette manufactures to use paper that is much less likely to burn if left unattended.

Approved October 4, 2005