



**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND COMMISSION**

**MICHAEL EASLEY
GOVERNOR**

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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DECEMBER 18, 2002**

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Commission awards \$9 million in grants to fight teen tobacco use in NC

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission today awarded 31 grants totaling nearly \$9 million, to be used over the next three years as part of a statewide campaign to help prevent North Carolina teens from using tobacco products. "This represents the single largest investment of State funds ever made to address this serious health issue in North Carolina," said Lieutenant Governor Beverly Perdue, who chairs the Commission. "Tobacco use among North Carolina teens is higher than the national average, and the long term costs for the state are enormous, both in human and economic terms."

The Commission awarded \$6.7 million in grants to 27 local coalitions that are principally comprised of school districts, county health departments and community-based organizations. The funds will be used for organizational development, promotional activities and local cessation programs. Another \$2.2 million in grants was awarded to four organizations that will focus their efforts on reaching out to African American, Hispanic and American Indian teens statewide, through culturally appropriate messages. "These grants will fund effective grassroots efforts in an attempt to reach all of our youth and help them lead healthier and more productive lives," added Beverly Perdue.

The Commission has allocated a total of \$18.6 million over three years to its Teen Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Initiative, which is based upon a model recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Other components of the Initiative include \$1.2 million annually for paid media and public relations efforts, and \$500,000 per year for enforcement of the State's prohibition on the sale of tobacco products to minors. Additionally, the American Lung Association will receive a grant to deliver its copyrighted tobacco cessation program, N-O-T to schools and other youth-serving organizations.

The Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission was established by the General Assembly to receive and allocate 25% of North Carolina's share of the multi-billion dollar national tobacco settlement agreement reached in 1999. The Commission is comprised of 18 individuals representing a wide background of health care experience throughout North Carolina.

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