

**Legislative Update**  
**March 10, 2018**

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**Focusing on Smoking Cessation, Cigarette Tax**

A focus on cigarette smoking and increasing the tax on cigarettes and tobacco products is growing in the Statehouse walls. On Tuesday, the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, chaired by Senator Vicki Schmidt (R-Topeka), will hold a hearing on [SB 436](#). This bill is identical to SB 316 that was already passed favorably from the same Senate committee, but did not rise above the Senate debate line before the turnaround deadline.

Senator Schmidt, not one to give up easily, introduced the same bill in Senate Ways and Means, thereby exempting it from legislative action deadlines. The bill would require smoking cessation treatments be covered for recipients of KanCare. KAFP will again offer testimony supporting the legislation.

Both the House and the Senate are planning hearings on legislation to increase the tax on a pack of cigarettes by \$1.50, raising the tax to \$2.79. The identical bills, [HB 2231](#) and [SB 376](#), would also increase the tobacco products tax from 10% to 65%. It adds the creation of the Cigarette and Tobacco Cessation Fund to be administered by the Department of Health and Environment, with the requirement that the first \$5 million in revenue raised will be deposited in this fund to support tobacco cessation efforts in the state.

The tax legislation faces stiff opposition, as always, but is expected to raise \$105 million in state revenues in its first year (FY 2019).

The hearing on HB 2231 is scheduled in House Taxation on Thursday, with the SB 376 now scheduled on March 22 in the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee. KAFP will provide testimony in both hearings supporting the legislation.

**Family Doctor of the Day**

KAFP sponsors the Family Doctor of the Day (FDOD) program during the Kansas legislative session. Licensed physicians, including residents, volunteer to provide mostly-minor health needs to legislators and their staff. The Legislature highly values and appreciates access to these services, especially when so many are away from their hometown primary care physicians.

The following members provided services last week: **Tara Neil, MD**, Wichita; **Jen McKenney, MD**, Fredonia; **Todd Miller, MD**, Wichita; and **Gretchen Irwin, MD**, Andover.

**Committee Action the Week of March 12-16**

Tuesday, Mar 13

9:30 am, Senate Public Health & Welfare, Room 118-N

*Hearing on: SB 436 – Providing Medicaid coverage for tobacco cessation treatments*

Thursday, Mar 15

9:00 am, House Children & Seniors, Room 218-N

*Hearing on: [HB 2704](#) – Requiring written informed consent before administering an antipsychotic medication to an adult care home resident*

3:30 pm, House Taxation, Room 346-S

*Hearing on: HB 2231 – Increasing tax rates of cigarettes and tobacco products; establishing the cigarette and tobacco products cessation fund*