

# OPINION Conservative Columnist

## Cigarette Tax is Unfair Tax on Behavior

Sensing a looming special session on pension reform in the Kentucky state legislature that promises to raise both existing and check full of additional unnecessary legislation, liberal editorial boards across the Commonwealth are sensing opportunity and have been trumpeting again the idea of raising the state's cigarette tax.

Raising the cigarette tax in Kentucky is a tax on behavior and would be immoral. It would add to a long line of government intrusions on personal freedom. Proponents of raising the cigarette tax will claim their purpose is to stamp out or slow down unhealthy behavior, fighting studies proving their assertions. But the fact that smoking is unhealthy should come as no surprise. Even as a former smoker it has always seemed obvious to me that lighting the end of a short, flammable cigarette and inhaling tobacco particulates through the other end would have negative effects on one's health. I am certain however, that most supporters of raising the cigarette tax engage in at least one unhealthy behavior of their own.

My problem with this proposal arises when government tries to use the moral argument for increasing revenue through taxing behavior. While happy to pay my fair share to support the infrastructure, I have never been a fan of behavioral

## Conservative Columnist By Leland Conway

This subject with Speaker of the House Jody Richards on my radio show before the last legislative session in which he asserted that because cigarette smokers typically have more health problems than non-smokers they should bear more of the burden of the health care costs. Others pose the same argument appealing to society's sense of fairness. On the surface, the claim makes sense, but does examination warrants further discussion.

If we are going to use this kind of logic then we must also conclude that we need to tax obesity, or at least have laws that lead to it. People who are obese also have many costly health problems. Should we put a \$1 tax on Twinkies? As a side note, in a recent debate a friend of mine admitted that there is no "second-hand" obesity, alluding to the fact that smokers may cause health problems in other people while the primary person associated with obesity are supposedly linked to the individual. But it is worth noting that a recent study suggests a correlation between raising obesity rates in this people who have lived around obese people for a long period of time. Another study shows that smokers, not unlike heavy drinkers and obese people, tend to die earlier in life. The same research suggests that the resulting health costs are actually lower over time when compared to a healthy person who lives much longer and uses many

more services over a lifetime. It is easy to say "tax the smokers" because they are in the minority and engage in an activity that many people find morally offensive. You will see though, how quickly the "moral" approach to the argument falls down when the same logic is applied to alcohol or Twinkies. Polls suggest that 57% of Americans believe it is time to time and we all love time a good party now and then. A sound argument can be made that health care costs derived from alcohol related diseases, injuries resulting from drunken behavior or diseases caused by obesity are similar to or worse than those arising from smoking. But suggest raising the tax on a bottle of beer by a dollar and see what happens.

Raising the tax on cigarettes may or may not slow smoking rates in Kentucky, but even if it does, punishing a minority of the populace to achieve this goal is made no more acceptable. It will certainly hurt small businesses and increase untaxed black market tobacco activity. In addition, it will ultimately hurt those it is intended to help. Taxing behavior is nothing more than a sneaky way for the government to expand the size of its treasury.

Leland Conway is Executive Editor of www.conservativevoice.com and host of "The Pulse of Lexington" on 630WLX. You can reach him by e-mail at lconway@lexington.com.

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Property Transfers

Fig. 57 Willoughby, John, died to 9.93 acres on Stony Creek Road, Willoughby, Billy Ray (no consideration).  
Fig. 64 Irvin, Phillip S. & Patty-Garrett, Melissa I. Fryman, Wendell A. & Tony L. Letcher, Garretta, died to land on Mulberry St., Glass, John D. & Robin, \$25,650 death tax.  
Fig. 75 Mortenson Family Dental Center, Carlisle PLLC to Quit claim Deed to a lot on South Locust Street, Albany (DM) 10,000 death tax.  
Fig. 78 Sims, Martha, Testamentary Trust Sims, William Trustee died to 7.58 acres on Dixie Highway, Hunt, Michael R. \$2,000 death tax.  
Fig. 82 Kirby, Bryan P. Kirby, Stephen L. & Karen died to 1.107 acres on Williams Rd., Isham, Gary F. & Deborah S. \$3,000 death tax.  
Fig. 83 Betz, Donnie R. & Lorretta K. died to lot with improvements on Locust Valley Morris, Leonard & Diers 25,500 death tax.  
Fig. 84 Conway, Michael B.

Fig. 106 Morris, Rita & David to deed to 7.18 acres Southeast of Ahlers Mill Road & Hughes, Michelle L. (love and affection) (12 interest) 8,000 death tax.  
Fig. 111 Heinlein, Edward D. & Mary P. 255.00 death tax.  
Fig. 103 Duncanson, Robert W. Estate Ball, Arnold H. II and Connie, died to land on Barrowville Subdivision Road in Village of Barterville, Mitchell, Timothy P. 19,000 death tax.  
Fig. 120 Conroy, Joseph H. Commissioner of Kentucky Housing Corp. David Schandling & Jeff Leonard, Commissioner's, died to land on Bald Hill Rd. Kentucky Housing Corp.

Fig. 129 Gains, Holmer H. & Linda died to lot #31 & 32, Section E, Lake Country Estates, Gaunon, Brent E. & Emily P. 255.00 death tax.  
Fig. 133 Duran, Robert W. Estate Ball, Arnold H. II and Connie, died to land on Barrowville Subdivision Road in Village of Barterville, Mitchell, Timothy P. 19,000 death tax.  
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## Response time essential to minimizing effects of heart attack, stroke and cardiac arrest

(MS) - One of the biggest concerns for seniors is ailments that affect the heart. For years, the leading cause of death among Americans has been coronary heart disease. While the danger of heart disease and stroke (the third leading cause of death among Americans) is a common knowledge, many might not know that early recognition of symptoms can make the most difference between life or death.

How quickly a person responds to symptoms of heart attack, stroke or cardiac arrest can also determine how much of a sufferer's life can be recovered. For example, in the case of stroke, each second that passes without recognition could prove very costly. However, if given within three hours of the onset of symptoms, a clot-busting drug can reduce long-term disability for the most common type of stroke. With that in mind, the following is a list of warning signs for heart attack, stroke and cardiac arrest.

**Heart Attack**  
The American Heart Association notes many people

Upper body discomfort. Pain can be felt in one or both arms, the back, the neck, jaw, or even the stomach.  
**Stroke**  
A quick response to stroke is especially important, as the longer it takes to recognize and respond to a stroke, the greater the risk of paralysis and loss of some brain function. Unlike some diseases of the heart, stroke symptoms are often characterized by the suddenness of their nature. Common indicators, according to the American Stroke Association, include:  
- Sudden numbness or weakness. This will affect the face, arm or leg, and will do so on one side of the body.  
- Sudden confusion. Stroke sufferers will suddenly become confused, and may have trouble speaking or understanding what is happening.  
- Shortness of breath. This starts occur both with or without chest pain, do not assume that shortness of breath when unaccompanied by other symptoms, is something to brush aside.

Learn the ways to prevent medication errors

(MS) - Medication errors can occur at any step during the health care process. It is estimated that on average, there is at least one medication error per hospital patient per day, although error rates vary widely across facilities. Errors can also occur at the pharmacy and result from doctors prescribing medications that just aren't needed for the patient. Estimates suggest that millions of people are injured each year from medication errors - mostly seniors. This should come as no surprise because seniors often take several prescriptions to maintain health and manage chronic diseases. Studies show the average senior takes four or five prescription drugs and two over-the-counter drugs on any given day, and this can compound the risk for complications. That adds up to quite a number of pills and liquids being consumed daily, which can be confusing in and of itself. Thus, senior metabolism among seniors means that drugs will remain in the body longer than in younger people, making them more prone to adverse drug reactions and the potential for overdose.

- 1. Notify your doctor of all over-the-counter, prescription drugs and vitamin or herbal supplements you are taking. Every one of these items has the potential to interact with new drugs your doctor may be thinking of prescribing.
- 2. Take the drugs your doctor prescribes according to directions (time of day, empty/full stomach, duration). Do not stop a medication without consulting with the doctor first, even if it seems like it may be a good idea.
- 3. Be aware that drugs can be listed and prescribed by their trade or generic name.
- 4. Some over-the-counter medications contain the same ingredients. For example, cold remedies can contain acetaminophen (Tylenol), therefore taking pain relievers on top of cold medicines could prove dangerous. Always read the packaging and warning labels before taking a drug or supplement.
- 5. Drinking alcoholic beverages when you are taking some medications may alter their effects or create hazardous reactions.
- 6. Pharmacies may offer special services to make managing medications easier. For example, some can print labels in larger print for the vision impaired. Prescriptions may be color-coded if multiple members of the family are taking different drugs and the opportunity for confusion exists.
- 7. Paper prescriptions may become extinct soon. New

struggling to walk from a loss of coordination or balance. Heart attacks often occur at night, and a sudden severe headache. This will appear out of nowhere, and an ambulance should be called immediately.

**Cardiac Arrest**  
Thanks to its sudden nature, the symptoms of cardiac arrest should be known by the relatives of people with heart problems. Because cardiac arrest strikes suddenly, it's the responsibility of loved ones to recognize what's happening and act quickly. Symptoms of cardiac arrest include:  
- Loss of responsiveness. This is sudden and the person suffering will not respond to tapping on the shoulder.  
- Abnormal breathing. Breathing patterns will change if you enter, and the victim will not breath normally or understanding what is happening.

of the case of any of the aforementioned symptoms, it's always best to be safe rather than sorry. Consult a physician to receive peace of mind.



Often, how quickly a loved one, such as a spouse, responds to symptoms of heart attack, stroke or cardiac arrest can determine the severity of damage.

## Senior Citizen News

Pharmacist John M. Brislin from OptiMed Senior Care Medication Services will be coming to our Center for Senior Citizens. Mr. Brislin will give talks on how to be a more effective consumer of medications and health care. His talks will also include information on how to stay safe in your home and several studies on how to stay safe. These talks will help you use medical services and medicines more effectively and help you to stay safe. One of the talks will be on how to control pain and how to get help in paying for your medications. The pharmacist will also be available to discuss your individual medications with you. If you want either bring in all of your medications or a list of them, Mr. Brislin will also be available to meet with a few patients in their home, if they are not able to come into the Senior Citizen Center. The dates are 6/16 and 6/30 at the Nicholas County Senior Citizens for more information call 859-289-3729.

## Tent revival planned

Beginning Friday, June 13th thru Sunday, June 15th, you are invited to come down and meet us at the revival tent on the grounds of the United Methodist Church of Rudolph Mills each evening starting at 7 p.m. Music, fellowship, testimony, spoken word, and lots of good times are sure to be there too. After having served in the ministry 43 years and 3 church Pastors, Roy Reynolds Ritchie is looking forward to sharing with you in this time of revival and restoration. Also, tune into 90.7 WPTJ. Can't wait to see you there. Hosted by: United Methodist Church, Rudolph Mills, Kentucky. Pastor and Mrs. John Smith 90.7 WPTJ.

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