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## **Enhancing the Public Health of all New Yorkers**

Weingarten Reid & McNally was the sole lobby firm representing a broad coalition of public health, health care provider, and public advocacy groups to successfully obtain a \$1.25 increase in the cigarette tax from \$1.50 to \$2.75, giving New York the highest cigarette tax in the country.

The public health benefit of the increased cigarette tax is monumental. Peter Slocum, the spokesman for the American Cancer Society said, “We think that’s fantastic. It will still probably prevent more than 200,000 teenagers from starting to smoke. That’s a win-win for now and for the future.” The tax is also expected to raise approximately \$265 million in additional revenues for the state that will be used to fund other vital health programs such as Child Health Plus and Doctors Across New York. Understanding the impact the tax would have on the health care of all New Yorkers, State Health Commissioner stated, “You can bet we were rooting behind the scenes for the tobacco tax.”