

Minnesota 2017-2018 Public Policy Priorities

Building healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

The American Heart Association / American Stroke Association supports and advocates for public policies that will help improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent while reducing deaths by coronary heart disease and stroke by 20 percent by 2020.

- ♥ **Active Transportation** —The American Heart Association recommends sixty minutes of physical activity daily and bicycling and walking can provide a good opportunity for physical activity if it's safe.
 - Appropriations for the State Active Transportation Program—we will continue our work to secure significant dedicated, ongoing resources for the program. Our proposal is to dedicate at least \$16 million per year through capture of the existing state sales tax on bicycles and bicycle parts.
 - Safe Routes to School—We will advocate for \$6 million in a one-time appropriation for SRTS infrastructure through the bonding bill.
- ♥ **Healthy Food Access** -- Following the success in establishing the Minnesota Good Food Access Program and securing \$250,000 over three years in initial funding, AHA will lead the effort to fund the initiative with an ongoing annual \$10M appropriation. As many as 900,000 Minnesotans lack access to convenient affordable healthy food in their communities, including 200,000 children. The problem is solvable for many with support for grocery stores, mobile markets, and healthy corner store initiatives.
- ♥ **Telephone CPR (T-CPR)** – AHA will seek legislation that requires all 911 telecommunicators that provide dispatch for emergency medical conditions be trained in the delivery of high quality telephone CPR. “High-Quality Telephone CPR (T-CPR) Instruction” is the delivery by trained 911 telecommunicators of high quality CPR instruction for acute events requiring CPR, including but not limited to, out-of-hospital cardiac arrests. In MN, some dispatchers are trained in emergency medical dispatch, allowing them to better assess the situation and provide medical instructions, like CPR, to the caller over the phone while they wait for EMS to arrive. AHA advocates for ALL dispatchers to be trained.
- ♥ **Tobacco 21** -- Almost 90 percent of addicted adult smokers started smoking by age 18. Increasing the age gap between kids and those who can legally buy tobacco will help remove access to tobacco products from the high-school environment. Increasing the legal age to purchase tobacco will mean fewer teenagers starting to smoke. Several cities in MN have already started action to raise the purchase age locally. AHA will play a lead role in seeking legislation to increase the legal age to buy tobacco from 18 to 21 across the entire state.
- ♥ **Access to Care /Healthcare Reform/Healthcare Access Fund** -- Changes to healthcare reform will continue to play a lead role in the 2018 legislative session in MN as well as the U.S. Congress. AHA will continue to advocate for access and coverage for individuals living with or at risk for CVD or Stroke. This includes: prohibiting discrimination in coverage for pre-existing conditions, prohibition of lifetime and annual insurance caps, dependent insurance coverage until age 26, prohibition of charging women more for health insurance than men, coverage for preventative services, etc... In 2018, decisions will be made on how to continue the Healthcare Access Fund (HCAF) in MN, which is the funding stream for MNCare and other important public health activities like the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP). The HCAF is funded by a 2% tax on Providers that will sunset by law in 2019. No other funding source for the HCAF has been identified. AHA will advocate in favor of continuing the HCAF and the Provider Tax as a funding mechanism.

Local Policy Initiatives

- **Tobacco 21** – Many local communities are enacting local ordinances to raise the age from 18 to 21 for tobacco purchase. AHA will support these local efforts.
- **Active Transportation** – Many counties are seeking to increase their local sales tax to fund unmet transportation needs at the local level. AHA will support local efforts to devote a portion of those new funds to support active transportation infrastructure and programs.
- **Healthy Food Procurement** – AHA will support local governments in ensuring that health food policies are adopted for services (meetings, cafeterias, etc.), vending, and institutional settings.

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