



# Leveraging Cigarette Tax for Public Health Efforts

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# Introductions



**Anurika Kumar**

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Studying Sociology & Biology



**Pranusha Amancherla**

4th year undergraduate student  
Studying Cognitive Science

# American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)

ACS CAN is an advocacy organization, led by volunteers and students, that educates about and lobbies for policies that promote lifestyle, treatment, and overall benefits for cancer patients, survivors and their loved ones.



# Our Work at UVA

## Tabling for Eliminate Tobacco Use Day

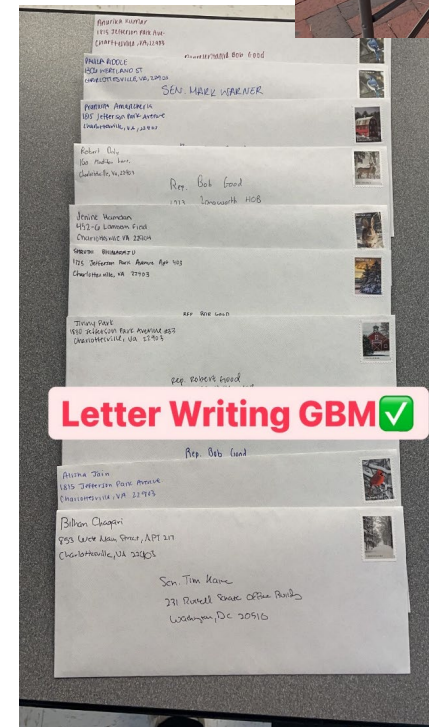
- Gathering data on UVA smoking policies

## Lobbying for American Cancer Society Asks

- Started a student petition of support for asks

## Campus Advocacy

- Letter writing
- Phone calls
- Information sessions



# Work at the Local Level

## Background

- In 2020, the Virginia General Assembly allowed localities to increase cigarette tax up to 40 cents in 2021.
- Our local planning commission formed a taxation board and our several of localities joined and increased their taxes in late 2021/early 2022

## Our Goal

- Educate local legislators on the importance that cigarette tax revenue goes back to those impacted by the tax. To support that, our ask is 5-10% of cigarette tax revenue in FY24 go towards cessation and prevention efforts

# Current Progress

## Data Gathering

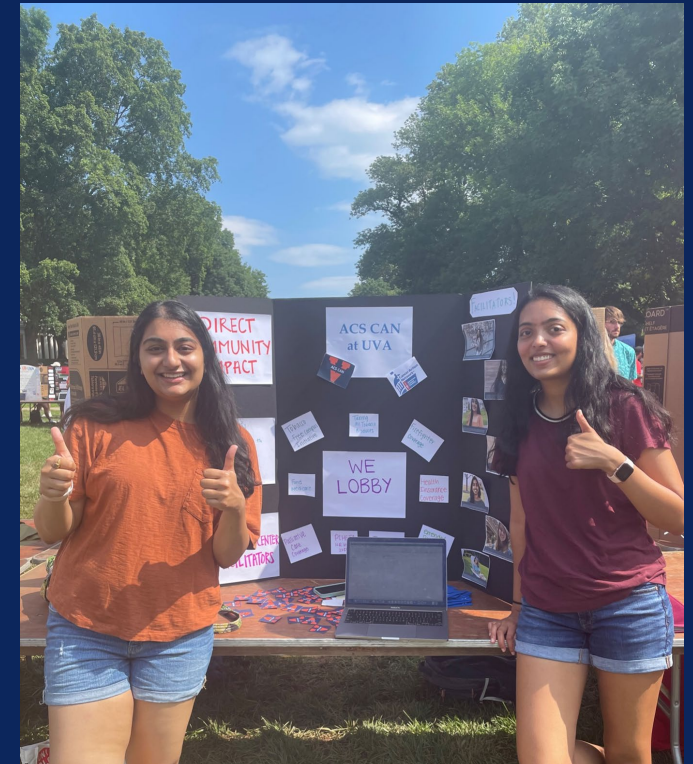
- Reviewed BOS minutes to understand the landscape and dynamics of each board
- Calculated potential revenue to develop the ask
- Researched local tobacco use data, best practice interventions and current local activities

## Training Session

- Policy training session with ACS CAN Staff

## Educational Sessions

- Presented to the local board of supervisors with our ask
- Outlined stats, trends and impacts with concrete solutions



# Next Steps

- Follow up with letters to the BOS re-emphasizing ask
- Reconnect in fall (budget season) to re-engage
- Work with health district to outline their work plan for cessation and prevention



# Why We Do It!

We come from diverse backgrounds, interests and goals. We all want to see a **CHANGE** in our communities. Either tangible or long-term, working together gives us solidarity towards a goal.

