

Smoking costs U.S. economy almost \$900 billion a year

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Smoking isn't only costly in terms of health risks, it also cost the U.S.

economy \$891 billion in 2020.

That was almost 10 times the cigarette industry's \$92 billion revenue, according to the authors of a new American Cancer Society study.

"Economic losses from cigarette smoking far outweigh any [economic benefit](#) from the [tobacco industry](#)—wages, and salaries of those employed by the industry, [tax revenue](#) and industry profit combined," said Dr. Nigar Nargis, senior scientific director of tobacco control research at the cancer society.

"As a society, we can mitigate these economic losses through coordinated and comprehensive evidence-based tobacco control measures, which encourage people to quit smoking and prevent people from starting to smoke in the first place," Nargis said in a cancer society news release.

For the study, researchers did economic modeling that measured economic loss from cigarette smoking by state.

States lost \$1,100 income per person annually (per capita) on average from cigarette smoking, the study found. The largest losses were in Kentucky, which lost \$1,674 per capita, West Virginia with \$1,605 and Arkansas at \$1,603. States with the smallest losses were Utah at \$331, Idaho at \$680 and Arizona at \$701.

"The damage this industry causes on individuals' lives and our nation's economy is horrifying," said Lisa Lacasse, president of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

"It's particularly alarming, but not surprising, to see some of the states with the highest economic loss have the weakest tobacco control policies in place," she said in the release. "We know what works to reduce

tobacco use and lessen this burden and it's past time we get it done."

[Policies proven to reduce tobacco use](#) include significant tobacco tax increases, adequate funding for tobacco prevention and cessation programs and comprehensive smoke-free laws, Lacasse noted.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' goal is to reduce smoking from 14% of adults in 2018 to 5% in 2030. That would greatly reduce [economic losses](#), the study authors said.

"The [Healthy People 2030](#) goal provides an important target that will help reduce smoking and correspondingly the negative economic impact of tobacco use," Nargis said.

The Lancet Public Health published the study findings.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [quitting smoking](#).

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