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## OLR Bill Analysis

### sHB 6730

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE TOBACCO AND HEALTH TRUST FUND.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill makes various changes affecting the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund.

It updates the statutory purposes for fund disbursements to include the reduction of tobacco and nicotine use in all forms, including e-cigarettes and vapor products, rather than just tobacco as under current law. Among other things, it requires that funding be directed to programs that use evidence-based best practices for various objectives, such as state and community interventions and surveillance and evaluation.

It also requires the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund board, in recommending annual fund disbursements, to give priority to comprehensive tobacco and nicotine control programs for specified purposes, such as (1) preventing first use of these products by youth and young adults and (2) identifying and eliminating tobacco and nicotine-related disparities.

Among other changes affecting the board, the bill specifies that board vacancies occurring other than by a term's expiration must be filled in the same way as the original appointment for the remainder of the term.

The bill also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

#### **TOBACCO AND HEALTH TRUST FUND**

##### ***Fund Purposes***

The bill updates the statutory purposes for fund disbursements to include the reduction of tobacco and nicotine use in all forms, including combustible, non-combustible, electronic, and synthetic products.

It requires that funding be directed to support and encourage tobacco and nicotine use prevention, education, and cessation programs that use evidence-based best practices for the following:

1. state and community interventions;
2. communication methods to spread health information to a wide audience;
3. cessation interventions;
4. surveillance and evaluation; and
5. infrastructure, administration, and management.

Under current law, funding must be directed to (1) support and encourage programs to reduce tobacco abuse through prevention, education, and cessation; (2) support and encourage program development for substance abuse reduction; and (3) develop and implement programs to meet the state's unmet physical and mental health needs.

### ***Annual Disbursements***

Under current law, the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund board, in recommending annual fund disbursements, must give priority to tobacco and substance abuse programs that serve minors, pregnant women, and parents of young children.

The bill instead requires the board to give priority to comprehensive tobacco and nicotine control programs for the following purposes:

1. preventing first use of these products by youth and young adults,
2. smoking cessation directed at adults and youth,
3. eliminating exposure to secondhand smoke and aerosol, and

4. identifying and eliminating tobacco and nicotine-related disparities.

As under current law, the board must also consider the availability of private matching funds.

### ***Board Vacancies***

By law, board members serve three-year terms. The bill specifically requires board members to continue to serve until their successors are appointed or designated. Under the bill, if a vacancy occurs other than by a term's expiration, it must be filled in the same manner as the original appointment for the remainder of the term.

### ***Biennial Report***

Existing law requires the board to submit a biennial report to the Appropriations and Public Health committees on the trust fund, including (1) all fund disbursements and expenditures, (2) an evaluation of the performance and impact of each program that gets funding, and (3) an accounting of any unexpended funds.

Current law also requires the report to include the criteria and application process used to select fund recipients. The bill specifies that this must include measurable outcome and evaluation criteria.

### ***Funding Sources***

The bill specifically allows the trust fund to apply for and accept assignments or transfers from public or private funding sources to carry out its purposes. The law already allows the fund to apply for and accept gifts, grants, or donations from these funding sources.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Related Bill***

sHB 6914, favorably reported by the Public Health Committee, (1) contains identical provisions on the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund's board and statutory purpose and (2) starting in FY 24, increases, from \$12 million to \$22.7 million, the annual disbursement from the Tobacco Settlement Fund to the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 37 Nay 0 (03/20/2023)