Minnesota Policy Agenda Wrap-Up: 2018 Progress

Good Food Access Program (GFAP)
Not being a year for big budget asks, AHA’s goal for GFAP this session was to continue highlighting the program’s current success and the lack of existing resources to meet demand, laying the groundwork for increased funding in 2019. Efforts included a Week of Action and GROW Reception with coalition partners.

Our strategy shifted to defense, though, when GFAP unexpectedly became the subject of a funding cut during final negotiations on a supplemental budget bill. AHA quickly mobilized to voice opposition and, although the legislature went on to pass the bill with a cut to GFAP funding, Governor Dayton vetoed it, with reductions to GFAP being among his objections. **AHA led outreach to highlight the impact of and demand for GFAP in MN communities and was a leader in advocating against funding cuts.**

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)/Active Transportation
Picking up bills introduced in 2017, AHA advocated for $6 million for SRTS infrastructure grants, which would benefit projects in an estimated 96 schools, reaching more than 24,000 kids in grades K–8. The legislature passed (and Governor Dayton signed) a bonding bill that allocates $1 million in new, one-time funding for SRTS infrastructure grants. This is in addition to the $500,000/year funding MnDOT receives for non-infrastructure projects (e.g., outreach and education). Securing a significant, dedicated appropriation for the State Active Transportation Program, which was established in 2017, continues to be an area of need moving forward to address broader needs for walking and biking infrastructure across Minnesota. Meanwhile, at the local level, Hennepin County will invest $6 million new dollars for the Hennepin County Safety Fund, to address problematic intersections and help make walking and biking safer throughout the county. **AHA’s advocacy helped secure $1 million for SRTS in the bonding bill, and $6 million for the Hennepin County Safety Fund!**

Grassroots Impact:
- Nearly **1,900 emails, letters and social media messages** were sent to lawmakers.
- Over **60 advocates** attended our Healthy Eating Impact and Telephone CPR Legislative Breakfasts.
- More than **1,800 petition cards** were delivered to local and state lawmakers.
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Tobacco 21 (T21)
Our statewide goals for T21 this year were modest, but critical. We needed to get a bill introduced in the House with a Republican author and we wanted an informational hearing. We were successful in getting a House bill introduced with Rep. Dario Anselmo (R-Edina) as our chief author. Because of Rep. Anselmo’s commitment, and an outstanding lobby day...we also got 7 additional republican co-authors! We were unable to secure a hearing in the final weeks of session, but we are positioned well to keep the momentum going next year!
On the local front however...T21 has exploded! As of June, the list of MN cities is now up to 11, including: Edina, St. Louis Park, Bloomington, Plymouth, Shoreview, Falcon Heights, North Mankato, St. Peter, Minneapolis, Richfield and Roseville. This momentum is huge and local volunteers have made all the difference! We are making great progress protecting more and more kids from ever becoming addicted to smoking by increasing the age to buy tobacco from 18 to 21.

Telephone CPR (TCPR)
This was our first year working on requiring all 911 dispatchers to be trained in high quality telephone CPR instruction. We had an excellent Legislative Breakfast event on the issue and met some outstanding and inspiring survivors. We had bipartisan bills introduced in the House and Senate, but we focused on education and coalition building this session with an eye on 2019. Following our Legislative Breakfast, we heard from many legislators asking for more info, so 2019 looks strong for TCPR! AHA is working to ensure that whenever someone calls 911 during a cardiac arrest, they will receive quality instruction on performing CPR!

Defense
We worked in opposition this session to Work Requirements for Medicaid, Pre-emption policies large and small and Short Term Limited Health Plans. All of these had negative impacts on CVD patients and heart health in MN, and fortunately none were signed into law. We are protecting Heart Healthy Polices across Minnesota!

For more information or to get involved in advocacy efforts, please contact Sarah Sanchez sarah.sanchez@heart.org or visit our website at www.yourethecure.org