

ATTENTION: NIH Desk Officer, Office of Management and Budget:
Federal Register Docket: E9-15583

The American Legacy Foundation (“Legacy”) applauds the National Cancer Institute (NCI) for its Cancer Information Service (CIS) tobacco cessation services via the 1-800-44U-QUIT and the LiveHelp web-based chat format. Too many Americans – 19.8%¹ of Americans (more than 43 million people) – continue to smoke. Quit lines, such as the one run by NCI, are critical for smokers who need help in quitting this deadly habit. Legacy believes that the proposed data collection in this docket is necessary to ensure the continuation and improvement of this valuable service. Since 70% of smokers say they want to quit and only 4.7% of smokers succeed in quitting smoking each year,² quit lines like 1-800-44U-QUIT are a very important tool in the arsenal for helping smokers quit. For many smokers, these free quit lines may be the *only* tool available to them due to lack of coverage for other cessation methods such as nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) or other interventions.

Legacy is a national, independent public health foundation created in 1999 out of the landmark Master Settlement Agreement (“MSA”) between the tobacco industry, 46 state governments and five U.S. territories. Our mission is to build a world where young people reject tobacco and anyone can quit. Legacy does not lobby or take positions on specific legislation. Our programs include:

truth® - A national youth smoking prevention media campaign responsible for preventing approximately 450,000 youth from beginning to smoke in its first four years.³

EX® - An innovative smoking cessation public education campaign designed to help smokers “re-learn” life without cigarettes.

Research Initiatives – Examining the various causes and effects of tobacco use in the United States.

Outreach to Priority Populations – Priority Populations Initiatives and grants provide critical interventions using methods that are culturally competent and tailored for the specific needs of communities disproportionately affected by the toll of tobacco.

Legacy concurs with NCI’s reasoning for collecting demographic information about those who use its smoking cessation services. This data is useful not only to NCI, but can be useful to the public health and tobacco control communities in determining programmatic planning, targeting promotion of these critical cessation services, and learning more about what motivates those attempting to quit smoking. Simply put, we need to know who is using these services to help formulate the most effective interventions in those communities. It is also important to collect health care coverage information, as many smokers do not have access to the cessation services they need due to lack of coverage.

The data collection proposed by NCI will help assure that these quit lines reach as broad an audience as possible. This will not only help reduce smoking and other tobacco use, but ensuring access to these quit lines to as many people as possible has the potential to ease the burden on the health care system as well, which benefits everyone.

¹ CDC, MMWR Cigarette Smoking Among Adults – United States 2007; November 2008

² CDC. Cigarette Smoking Among Adults- United States, 2000. MMWR 2002; 51(29): 642-645.

³ Farrelly MC, Nonnemaker J, Davis KC, Hussin A. The Influence of the National truth Campaign on Smoking Initiation. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 2009; 36(5): 379-384.