

**RESOLUTION TO REDUCE SMOKING IN MISSISSIPPI**  
**As Passed by the Mississippi Baptist Convention 11/02/05**

**WHEREAS**, human beings are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27); and

**WHEREAS**, individuals are endowed with great dignity and inestimable value; and

**WHEREAS**, more than 4,700 Mississippians die horrible but preventable deaths caused by tobacco addiction each year, and more suffer from tobacco-caused disability and disease; and

**WHEREAS**, every year 9,300 Mississippi children become addicted to tobacco and 81,600 children alive today will die early from smoking-related diseases; and

**WHEREAS**, exposure to secondhand smoke in the home, workplace, restaurants, and other public areas endangers thousands of Mississippians every year; and

**WHEREAS**, smoking kills more people than alcohol, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined---and thousands more die from other tobacco-related causes, such as fires caused by smoking and smokeless tobacco use; and

**WHEREAS**, Mississippi's health care expenditures caused by tobacco totals over \$622 million each year, including more than \$243 million in annual tobacco-caused expenditures by the State Medicaid program; and

**WHEREAS**, the tobacco industry spends \$200 million annually in the State of Mississippi to entice Mississippians to use its products; and

**WHEREAS**, in a resolution the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, June 21-22, 2005, commended the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, the American Lung Association and other health organizations along with jurisdictions who have taken measures to raise the price of tobacco products through tax increases; now therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Mississippi Baptist Convention supports efforts to prevent and reduce smoking and other tobacco use in Mississippi, particularly among children and teens; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that we encourage our churches to educate and inform our youth as to the dangers of tobacco use; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that we encourage our state government to continue funding of programs designed for prevention and cessation of tobacco use and to work to create a smoke-free environment in all public places, including restaurants and bars; and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, that we commit ourselves to seek ways to help alleviate this destructive problem through personal and community efforts and by encouraging our elected officials to take aggressive actions in reducing smoking in our state.