



A Program of Washington County Health Partners

The Intent of the Master Settlement Agreement

“When there is talk about using it (Master Settlement Agreement funds) for debt reduction of the States, that is very important. But it is not related to tobacco causes.

These are funds produced from a tobacco settlement, and if the States do not use these funds in this way (for tobacco-related causes), my legal judgment is that these funds are impressed with a trust enforceable by any citizen of the State. It is vital that we act now to ensure that these funds are used to protect public health.

During the discussion which is currently occurring in the States on how to use the tobacco funds, a wide variety of uses have been proposed. Specifically, I understand that States have plans to spend funds on roads, mental health services, to assist tobacco farmers, and to eliminate the State debt, increase teacher pay, other proposed uses include financing tax relief, and using these revenues to fund a new Merit Award Trust Fund.

While all of these goals may be noble, I am convinced that **States**, who sued tobacco companies to reimburse State health costs as a result of smoking, **have a fiduciary duty to use these funds to reduce smoking and to support public health.**”

--US Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA), Senate debate, March 17-18, 1999.