

Arkansas Tobacco Settlement Commission Meeting Minutes

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, September 08, 2004	MEETING TIME: 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
CHAIRPERSON: Gen. (RET) Bill Lefler, DDS, FACP	MEETING PLACE: Main Street Mall Building
PERSON RECORDING: AT&T Teleconference	ATSC Conference Room, 101 East Capitol Avenue, Little Rock.
BOARD MEMBERS:	
Present	Not Present
Gen. (Ret.) Bill B. Lefler, D.D.S., Chairman	Susan Baret
John Ahlen, Ph.D	
Fay Boozman, M.D.	
Ken James, Ed.D.	
Omar Atiq, M.D.	
Anthony Fletcher, M.D.	
Kurt Knickrehm	
Ron Harrell (designee for Linda Beene, Ed.D.)	
STAFF:	
Chiquita Munir	
Shabbir Khan	
INVITED GUESTS:	
Suzanne McCarthy, UAMS	
David Robinson, Arkansas News Bureau	

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	RECOMMENDATION/ACTION	FOLLOW-UP STEPS
<p>Introduction and Welcome</p>	<p>General Lefler called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. General Lefler welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Ron Harrell, representing Dr. Linda Beene from the Department of Higher Education.</p> <p>Written handouts were distributed by Chairman Lefler:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting agenda ▪ RAND Revised Recommendations (Chapter 12) 		

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<p><u>New Business</u></p> <p>Biennial Report</p>	<p>General Lefler mentioned that the Arkansas Tobacco Settlement Commission (ATSC) will report to the Public Health Welfare and Labor Committee on September 09, 2004 on the RAND Biennial Report and the ATSC program progress. General Lefler praised RAND and said that he was very pleased with the RAND Draft Report and Draft Recommendations. He added “the report was well-written, comprehensive and positive on all seven ATSC programs, with exceptions of Medicaid Expansion and Minority Health Initiative.”</p> <p>General Lefler said that a controversy has developed about the RAND Draft Report on cutting 20% of Arkansas Bioscience Institute (ABI) funds. The General said that the initial report was reported as ‘gospel’ even though it was a Draft Report. He added the recommendations on the Draft Report are to be consideration by the Commission for its final recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly in its Biennial Report. He also mentioned that the Commission members did not agree to RAND’s recommendation of cutting ABI’s fund by 20%.</p>	<p>General Lefler explained the reasoning for RAND’s such recommendation. The Tobacco Prevention Cessation, one of the programs of ATSC, was initially set to receive 31.6% of the Tobacco Settlement Funds. However, due to reduction in Tobacco Settlement fund, the Tobacco Prevention Cessation fund has reduced from \$18 million to \$14 million. RAND reported this reduction as a threat and therefore recommended the 20% cut in ABI’s funding. General also said that the transfer of funding from ABI by 20% is not appropriate for three clear indications:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Initiated Act states that no program is given prioritization over another. 2) RAND failed to recognize that the state has identified external funding streams to support tobacco control outside the Tobacco Settlement Funds. 3) Recommendations to transfer funds is beyond scope of RAND’s contract. 	

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<p><u>New Business</u></p> <p>Biennial Report</p>	<p>Dr. Fletcher inquired Dr. Boozman if it is possible to realize a reduction or fluctuation during the allocation of funding.</p> <p>Dr. Boozman disagreed with RAND's recommendation to increase funding share for the Tobacco Prevention Education program.</p> <p>The two RAND recommendations to the Tobacco Prevention Education Program are: 1) To increase the funding share of Tobacco Cessation Program to return its funding level with the CDC requirement and 2) The state should move forward with legislation to ban smoking in public places, in order to achieve and maintain behavior changes for Arkansans in the long run and reduction in smoking rates.</p> <p>He further added that the Tobacco Prevention Cessation is currently operating above the minimum level recommended by CDC. He requested that recommendation be taken off. Boozman said that the objective of RAND should be whether all the seven programs are doing their job efficiently. He thinks that RAND did a good job at evaluating all the seven programs. Boozman added all the seven ATSC programs are doing a great job, with exceptions, but any language on the recommendations going beyond what is specified in the Act should be taken off.</p>	<p>Dr. Boozman mentioned that it was predictable that the Tobacco Settlement Fund will be very variable – that's why it is put on a percentage point, rather than a dollar amount. He said that the \$14 million reduction does not mean there was a reduction in funding - it just implies the fluctuation of how the money was distributed.</p> <p>Dr. Ahlen clarified with Dr. Boozman on the two RAND recommendations to the Tobacco Prevention Cessation program. The two recommendations are: 1) to increase the funding share of Tobacco Cessation Program to return its CDC funding level requirement and 2) The state should move forward with legislation to ban smoking in public places in order to reduce smoking rates. Dr. Ahlen agreed with Dr. Boozman to take off the recommendation which stated an increase in funding level of the Tobacco Prevention Cessation program. Dr. Lefler agreed with Dr. Boozman. He said that the RAND Revised Report has included new information which states that Medicare has added up to \$3 million in funding to help the Tobacco Cessation Program. He also mentioned that the State Employee/Public Teacher plan has added tobacco preventive services to include Tobacco Cessation Program up to \$1 million. General also pointed out that RAND included hypertension as a health priority issue on their Revised Report as requested by Dr. Fletcher.</p> <p>Ron Harrell, representing Dr. Linda Beene from the Department of Higher Education, agreed with Dr. Boozman, and complimented all the seven programs on doing a great job.</p>	

<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>Dr. Atiq inquired what action did the Commission need to make on the RAND Revised Recommendations today.</p> <p>Dr. Ahlen entertained a motion to accept all of the recommendations with the exception of bringing the ADH funding levels back up to CDC minimum requirements, and the suggestion of shifting program funding. Dr. Fletcher seconded. All Commissioners present approved</p> <p>General Lefler entertained a motion to adjourn this meeting of the ATSC</p> <p>With no other business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Dr. Lefler said that the Commission need to vote on the RAND Recommendations and whether all the Commissioners approve the RAND revisions. He stated these recommendations will be advanced in the upcoming report for consideration by the Governor and the General Assembly. The Commission can use all of RAND's recommendations, or vote not to.</p> <p>Ms. Munir stated that at this point, the Commission needs to vote on advancing all or some of the recommendations with the exception of the ones not agreed upon. Ms. Munir stated that the ATSC staff is currently working on a separate report – in which the areas where the Commission disagrees with the RAND will be noted.</p> <p>General Lefler motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Ahlen seconded. All Commissioners unanimously approved.</p>	
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