

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Attention: News, Health, Community, A & E and Teen page calendar editors

**NEW TOBACCO PREVENTION INITIATIVE
OFFERS TEENS THE CHANCE TO BE “BUTT-
KICKING” TV STARS
“TRU ROAD TRIP” COMING TO A TOWN NEAR YOU WITH
THOUGHT-PROVOKING EXHIBITS AND TV PRODUCTION IN TOW**

(Raleigh, NC) — In a first for North Carolina, the state’s teen tobacco use prevention campaign is hitting the road and inviting local teens to become “butt-kicking” stars of new television commercials.

The TRU (Tobacco. Reality. Unfiltered.) campaign will travel to six locations across North Carolina in June, July and August. Dubbed the TRU Road Trip, the caravan will feature exhibits on the dangers of tobacco use, information on TRU local programs, a chance to win prizes from T.J. Maxx, the Carolina Hurricanes and others, and a TV crew that will gather footage for new TV commercials to air in the fall. Survivors of tobacco-related illnesses will be on hand to share their experiences.

TRU ROAD TRIP DATES AND LOCATIONS:

The TRU Road Trip takes the teen tobacco use cessation and prevention message to six NC cities all summer:

- Winston-Salem (June 25, 2 - 5 p.m., State Games TRU Block Party at the Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum)
- Kinston (July 9, 5:30 - 8 p.m., Kinston Indians baseball game, outside Grangier Stadium)
- Durham (July 17, 3 - 6 p.m., at American Tobacco Historic District)
- Fayetteville (July 24, 1 - 4 p.m., at Cross Creek Mall)
- Wilmington (July 30, Legion Stadium, Wilmington Sharks baseball game) (Times TBD)
- Hickory (August 27, 5:30 - 8 p.m., Hickory Crawdads baseball game at L.P. Frans Stadium)

TRU ROAD TRIP BACKGROUND AND KICK-OFF:

The TRU campaign and the road trip are sponsored by the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF). Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, HWTF chairperson, said in announcing the road trip on June 24, “We’re literally taking this potentially life-saving show on the road. We want to both listen to what teens have to say about tobacco and to provide

them with the information and support they need to live tobacco-free. Research shows that North Carolina is on the right track. Results from the 2003 NC Youth Tobacco Survey show that across the state, current cigarette use among middle school students has dropped 38 percent since 1999 – from 15 percent to 9.3 percent. However, high school cigarette use was at 27.3 percent in 2003, not a significant drop from 1999. We're reaching many kids, but we must reach more."

Lt. Gov. Perdue noted that when the first TRU television campaign launched in the April, visits to the campaign's Web site, www.realityunfiltered.com, shot up 140 percent from the site's previous high mark and that traffic has remained higher in 2004 than in 2003. "Teens are definitely interested," Lt. Gov. Perdue said. "Now is the time to act."

ABOUT THE NC HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND:

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund makes North Carolina stronger, both physically and economically, by funding programs that promote preventive health. Created by the General Assembly in 2000 to allocate a portion of North Carolina's share of the national tobacco settlement, HWTF has invested \$55 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$78 million to fund a prescription drug assistance program. For more information, please visit www.hwtfc.org.

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