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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Media Campaign Generates Record Call Volume to QuitlineNC**

### ***Great American Smokeout® Encourages Even More Young Smokers to Quit***

**(North Carolina)** – On the annual day that challenges smokers nationwide to quit, North Carolina is seeing its own successes as hundreds of 18- to 24-year-old smokers have taken steps to kick the habit. A record number of calls to QuitlineNC, following the launch of the state's first-ever QuitlineNC media campaign, proved that young smokers in North Carolina are not waiting until today's Great American Smokeout® to make their commitment to good health.

Funded by the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF), the "Call It Quits" campaign is working to reduce the number of young smokers in North Carolina. Smoking prevalence among young adults is the highest of any age group in the state. According to the CDC, nearly 28 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds in North Carolina smoke – and more than half have tried to quit in the past year.

Just two months into the "Call It Quits" multi-media advertising campaign to promote Quitline NC to 18- to 24-year olds, 455 young adult smokers have already registered for the free phone service to create their own plan for quitting tobacco. This represents a monthly average of 228 young adult registrants compared to a monthly average of only 34 across the six months preceding the campaign -- nearly a seven-fold increase in registrations from 18- to 24-year olds.

HWTF Chair Lt. Gov. Bev Perdue said the favorable QuitlineNC results demonstrate that media campaigns are effective in promoting the cessation services that double the chances that a smoker will quit for good.

"On the Great American Smokeout, the day where millions of smokers around the country are challenged to quit smoking, our state is already experiencing impressive successes in increasing the numbers of young people who quit," Perdue stated. "QuitlineNC is the first step to saying 'no' to tobacco use and 'yes' to good health."

HWTF launched the "Call It Quits" campaign in September 2007. The campaign reaches out to young adults through TV, radio, print and interactive media to give smokers an inside look at how QuitlineNC works by simulating a call between a smoker and a quit coach.

Quitline NC (1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-800-784-8669) is a toll-free phone service that connects tobacco users with a quit coach, offering callers advice, support and referrals to local cessation resources. Quitline NC is available 8 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week.

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**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 \$143 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$102 million to fund prescription drug assistance programs. For more information, please visit [www.HealthWellNC.com](http://www.HealthWellNC.com).

**About the Great American Smokeout®**

Every year, smokers across the nation take part in the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout® by smoking less or quitting for the day on the third Thursday of November. The event challenges people to stop using tobacco and raises awareness of the many effective ways to quit for good.

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