

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 27, 2006

Statement from HWTF Chair Lt. Gov. Bev Perdue about the New Surgeon General's Report on the Effects of Secondhand Smoke

"I'm proud that through the efforts of the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF), we are creating tobacco-free schools where kids can learn and our teachers can work without being exposed to secondhand smoke," said Lt. Governor Bev Perdue, chair of the HWTF.

On June 26 by a 5-0 vote, the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Schools became the 76th school system in North Carolina to adopt a 100% Tobacco-Free Schools policy. When HWTF began funding the TFS campaign in 2002, only 14 of the 115 NC school districts had this policy in place.

According to the 2005 NC Youth Tobacco Survey, school systems that have had a 100% TFS policy in place for four or more years, have 40% fewer teen smokers than those school systems without the policy.

The full report, the executive summary, a report to the public entitled "What It Means to You", highlight sheets, and other related information on the report will be available on the Surgeon General's Web site (www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/secondhandsmoke/).

From 3:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. (EST), the media will be able to access bites and b-roll from the news conference via satellite at coordinates: C-BAND: AMC 3 / TRANSPONDER 3 / AUDIO 6.2 & 6.8 DL: 3860 (H).

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 \$127 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$78 million to fund a prescription drug assistance program. For more information, please visit www.HealthWellNC.com.

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