

**Up in Smoke: A Tradeoff Study between Tobacco as an Economic  
Development Tool or Public Health Liability in an American Indian Tribe  
[Abstract]**

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This article explores American Indians' attitudes about further tobacco regulation. Many American Indian tribes rely upon the selling of inexpensive tobacco to generate government revenue and employment for communities that, typically, are economically disadvantaged. Although tobacco sales create significant revenue for those tribes that sell tobacco products, tobacco use also causes 40 percent of American Indian deaths. Mounting evidence suggests that the inexpensive tobacco is partially responsible for high smoking prevalence. To better understand American Indian support for tobacco regulation in its existing context on reservations, we surveyed members of a federally recognized tribe involved in both the sale and manufacturing of tobacco products in rural Washington State. Our results showed participants followed their individual self-interest, though approximately 30 percent of participants supported reduction of tobacco use in the face of substantial costs. Participants were most accepting of tobacco regulation when associated economic costs were framed vaguely. Participants were least supportive if the costs were framed as the loss of jobs and direct cash payments. Smokers and tribal employees were overall least supportive of regulating tobacco sales. These results suggest that efforts to reform tobacco-based development strategies should emphasize the individual-level costs associated with collective higher use among American Indians.

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