



North Carolina **Alliance for Health**

Advocacy is Our Purpose

**Emerging & Dynamic Approaches to Supporting
Obesity Prevention in the South**

2015 Southern Obesity Summit

Jackson, Mississippi



North Carolina **Alliance for Health**

Alliance Mission

NCAH is an independent, statewide **coalition** of individuals, businesses and nonprofits working to promote obesity and tobacco prevention policies before NC's legislative and executive branches.



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Our Mission in Action

- More than 100 organizations from across the state have joined or partnered with the Alliance to promote policy efforts to:
 - Control the use of tobacco by raising NC's cigarette tax, eliminating secondhand smoke from worksites & public places, and securing funding for tobacco use prevention and cessation programs;
 - Address obesity issues by promoting PE, child nutrition programs, increasing access to healthy foods, and issues around built environments.



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Current Policy Campaign:

Secure state funding for a Healthy Corner Store Initiative (HCSI)

- In 2013 HB 957: Food Deserts Introduced
- Voices Funding Opportunity Announced – NCAH Applies to work on HCSI
- 2013 – 2014 NC House forms Study Committee on Food Deserts
- 2014 – No legislative movement; NCAH focuses heavily on grassroots and media; VFHK provides resources for polling
- 2015 – HB 250/SB 296 Healthy Food Small Retailer/Corner Store Act Introduced; New Partners working the issue
- 2015 – HB 250 included in House Budget and Legislation passed the NC House



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Coalition's Biggest Challenge: Consistent Funding

- Coalition started in 2002 to address tobacco control issues.
- Began work in 2008 on obesity prevention but no funding opportunities available until 2013.
- Funding options limited because of the focus on policy work.
- Coalition needs stability to be able to maintain staff and organization cohesion; build grassroots and media support for issue work.
- Multi-year funding needed for campaigns.
- Other funders should follow the lead of RWJF
- Coalitions need to develop ways to secure unrestricted funds



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What's Working – Broad Perspective

- Non-lobbying funding resources for a proactive campaign:
 - Campaign Coordinator
 - Polling and Media Training
 - Innovative campaign approaches: Video, Social Media
 - Technical Assistance Expertise: The Food Trust
 - Assistance building new partners and building the grassroots
- Complimentary resources for contract lobbyist assistance
- VFHK Trainings and Peer Learning
- Multiple states working on similar issues (example southern states working on healthy food access at the same time)



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What's Working – Campaign Specific

- Media has great interest in the healthy food access issue and is an effective advocacy ally;
- Selfless Legislative Champions;
- Success increasing the number and diversity of partners creating greater strength;
- Campaign was built on local successful pilot project.
- Engaging the lawmakers from the pilot community to support the statewide bill brought the issue bi-partisan support which has kept the issue moving.



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Lessons Learned

- Resources make the campaign happen.
- Technical Assistance – You Really Need It
 - Knowing what is truly lobbying and what is not (much of what we do is not lobbying)
 - Polling and Messaging
 - Lessons learned who have worked the issue and found success
- Obesity isn't Tobacco
- Coalitions Create Power
- Fundraising – making this part of someone's job
- The messenger really matters.
- Political insiders are truly important.



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Next Steps in 2016

- Apply for 3rd Year Funding
- Build Faith Community Partnerships
- Field work in areas of local access to healthy foods
- Expand partnerships with Farmers, Fisherman and Store Owners
- Strategic focus on key lawmakers



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Thank You!

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