



# Missouri's Low Cigarette Taxes (And Why They Should Stay That Way)

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The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* [recently published](#) an article lamenting the fact that Missouri has the nation's lowest taxes on cigarettes. They are not alone; the [Kansas City Star editorial](#) that I wrote about on April 3 pushed for the state to raise the cigarette tax. The *Post-Dispatch* and *Star* articles differ on the reasons they want the cigarette tax increased; however, does it occur to people that there might be negative consequences to raising the cigarette tax?

For instance, stores in Missouri that are on the border with other states [attract business](#) from people shopping here in order to take advantage of the state's low excise taxes. Show-Me Institute intern Amy Lutz recently [wrote an op-ed](#) that details the impact such a tax hike could have on interstate commerce.

Also, an increased tax on cigarettes would [disproportionately harm the poor](#). The *Post-Dispatch* article mentions that raising taxes is an effective method for getting people to quit smoking. Do increased cigarette taxes result in **significantly** fewer smokers? If smoking is bad for us, and it is OK to increase taxes on that, where does it end? What next, enormous taxes on sugar to finance heavy broccoli subsidies? What about an obesity tax? Isn't there

something offensive about government micromanaging our lives?

## About the Author



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[1] <https://showmeinstitute.org/blog/taxes-income-earnings/missouris-low-cigarette-taxes-and-why-they-should-stay-way>

[2] [http://www.stltoday.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/missouri-s--cents-cigarette-tax-remains-at-the-bottom/article\\_2af53b82-80dc-11e1-8dee-0019bb30f31a.html](http://www.stltoday.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/missouri-s--cents-cigarette-tax-remains-at-the-bottom/article_2af53b82-80dc-11e1-8dee-0019bb30f31a.html)

[3] <http://www.kansascity.com/2012/03/31/3525024/the-stars-editorial-missouri-by.html>

[4] <http://www.showmeinstitute.org/publications/video/taxes/655-blackhawks-fans.html>

[5] <http://www.news-leader.com/article/20120420/OPINIONS02/304200021/-1/7daysarchives/Missouri-will-lose-business-tobacco-tax-hike>

[6] <http://www.taxfoundation.org/news/show/22476.html>

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