



**ROBERT A. BUTKIN
OKLAHOMA STATE TREASURER**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

TIM ALLEN, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR, (405) 522-4212

**\$2.7 MILLION CERTIFIED FOR USE
COMBATING TOBACCO ADDICTION**

OKLAHOMA CITY – State efforts to combat tobacco addiction in Oklahoma received a \$2.7 million boost on Thursday, State Treasurer Robert Butkin announced. The money represents investment earnings on the state’s tobacco settlement trust fund.

In a meeting at the State Capitol on Thursday afternoon, members of the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust Fund Board of Investors, chaired by Treasurer Butkin, certified the \$2.7 million for use by the trust fund’s Board of Directors during the current fiscal year.

“We have a long ways to go before we win the war against tobacco addiction, but today’s action gives us much needed ammunition,” Butkin said. “This \$2.7 million is almost double the amount certified for use last year. As we continue to invest this growing trust fund, our earnings will also grow to provide even more help in future years.”

Established by voter approval of a constitutional amendment in 2000, the tobacco settlement trust fund receives an annually-increasing share of the state’s settlement payments. During this fiscal year, the fund will receive 60 percent of the state’s share of the tobacco settlement.

The tobacco money is permanently invested with earnings dedicated to projects such as the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline that was announced earlier this week. The helpline, 1-866-PITCH ‘EM, is a toll-free telephone service to assist Oklahomans who want help ending their addiction to tobacco.

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