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FM 91.3 KUWS

Mike
Simonson



News From 91.3 KUWS

Joint Finance Committee hears Bayfield students protests about Big Tobacco

Story posted Tuesday at 10:22 a.m.

3/30/2009

High school students made their case before members of the Joint Finance Committee this weekend against tobacco. Mike Simonson reports from Superior.

Students from “FACT”... short for “Fight Against Corporate Tobacco”...told legislators in Ashland Saturday that Wisconsin is the third highest state in the country for tobacco abuse among Native Americans. Bayfield High School junior Kyle Newago says it’s wrong for cigarette companies to push tobacco. As a member of the Red Cliff Band of Chippewa, Newago says it irks him that cigarette companies disregard the sacred use Native people have for tobacco.

“It represents my belief in each other and how we are connected to the earth. Tobacco is supposed to be used in these types of ceremonies as well as other offerings not to be exploited by corporations to make money. Tobacco companies use Native American culture and logos to sell their product which is not right.”

State Representative Pedro Colon of Milwaukee says tobacco shouldn’t be abused.

“We have to find a place where we respect the tradition of smoking. It’s sacred and in some senses it extends all the way down to the bottom of Brazil to the top of Lake Superior.”

Wisconsin is proposing a 75 cents a pack increase in this year’s budget.

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