

**From:** [Albert Ettedgui](#)  
**To:** [\\_CityCouncilListPublic](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Tobacco Retail License  
**Date:** Thursday, May 16, 2024 12:00:16 PM  
**Attachments:** [SR City Council TRL Letter.pdf](#)

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Greetings to the SR City Council Members. My letter to you is attached.

Respectfully,

Albert M. Ettedgui (eh-ted-ghee) ~ Teacher, Social Sciences Department, Ridgway High School

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Albert M. Ettegui  
5728 Evening Way  
Santa Rosa, CA 95409



May 15, 2024

Santa Rosa City Council

Dear Members of the Santa Rosa City Council,

My name is Albert Ettegui and I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the Tobacco Retail License (TRL) Ordinance that you will be considering on May 21, 2024. I am a 32 year resident of Santa Rosa and a father of two sons who have been raised in this community. I am also an employee of the Santa Rosa City School district, with 11 years of teaching experience and 15 years of service as a high school assistant principal. I hope that you consider me a friend and a fellow Santa Rosan with “front-line” experience.

I am primarily writing to you from the perspective of a high school assistant principal who has extensive experience with the disciplinary process, including close work ties with SRPD. I started in site administration at Elsie Allen High School in 2002 when SRCS was a “zero tolerance” district. By 2012 we transitioned to being a “Restorative” district. It can be argued that we were overly punitive in the first part of my admin career. It can also be argued that our current Restorative approach to misconduct and Ed Code violations has fallen short of its potential due to inadequate resource allocation by our Board of Education, our District Office and by local and state government agencies. If we genuinely have concern or motivation to provide a safe community and safe schools for our youth, then the TRL is one of a number of resources and strategies that must be implemented. The TRL, however, is a downstream measure that impacts point of sale. Much further upstream, we have over 60,000 students in our county. I can only speak about SRCS. In my 26 years of service, I can tell you that we lack a comprehensive plan or adequate human resources for substance abuse and addiction education, counseling and diversion. School principals and co-administrators don’t have a punitive option for nicotine/tobacco related Ed Code violations, nor do they have a meaningful Restorative pathway to address these violations. The message our students incorrectly take from this is that it’s a smoking free-for-all in the bathrooms. Students are using nicotine and marijuana vapes on our campuses every hour of every day and our Campus Supervisors and site administrators do not have the necessary training, resources or support to stop this. Believe me please when I tell you that it is getting worse. It’s not due to a lack of caring. It is due to the opportunity cost of devoting our limited supervisory resources to vaping incidents. If we do that, then we are foregoing supervision in the hallways, quads, campus entries and exits and dining areas. We plug

the most critical holes in the dam, and thanks to our BOE, we do it without the highly effective and fully funded SRPD School Resource Officer Program.

A multi-faceted approach can be effective. The TRL is one necessary component. In addition to that, specialized diversion, education and counseling resources must be developed and placed in all of our schools. Administrators need to be permitted to use the disciplinary process and punitive measures when appropriate. Finally, we must have the School Resource Officers back on our campuses.

Thank you so much for your service to our community and for your attention to this important issue. Please consider me as a friend and as a member of this community who is willing to join the effort to achieve a positive outcome for the benefit and well-being of our youth.

Sincerely,

Albert M. Ettedgui

**From:** [Karen Mitchell](#)  
**To:** [\\_CityCouncilListPublic](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Santa Rosa City Council re: TRL Letter of Support West County Health Centers  
**Date:** Thursday, May 16, 2024 1:01:19 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[SR City Council TRL - WCHC Support Letter .pdf](#)

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Good afternoon,

I have attached a letter of support regarding TRL from Dr. Jason Cunningham, DO from West County Health Centers. Thank you!

Kind regards,

Karen

Karen Mitchell  
Executive Assistant to the CEO  
Office - 707-271-3308  
[kmitchell@wchealth.org](mailto:kmitchell@wchealth.org)







West County  
Health Centers

*Caring for our Communities*

a california *health*.center

May 16, 2024

**Board of Directors 2024**

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Dear Santa Rosa City Council Members,

West County Health Centers, a Federally Qualified Health Center in Sonoma County, is thankful for the city council's ongoing leadership to support the health of all residents of your districts. I write to encourage you to be thoughtful in your leadership related to the Tobacco Retail License before you for consideration. **There are few opportunities in leadership to have demonstrable and generational impact from our work, I am convinced that smart tobacco retail licensing offers this opportunity.**

Tobacco use has an outsized impact on our communities' health and has a particularly devastating impact on our youth. Common sense policies can have a significant impact on positive behavior change in our communities and on health outcomes. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 1 in 4 cardiovascular disease deaths nationally are attributed to tobacco smoking and is the #1 cause of preventable death, disease and disability. In Sonoma County alone, 11% of deaths are related to tobacco use.

Our youth are highly susceptible to addiction. Recent data from the Sonoma County 2024 Youth Truth Survey indicates that 6% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders are regularly using cigarettes, and 13% are regularly using e-cigarettes. Regular use is present for our early adolescents with 5% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders regularly using e-cigarettes. The long-term health effects of addiction to nicotine are profound and can be mitigated with early intervention and support.

We know that Tobacco Retail policies are effective mechanisms to monitor tobacco sales, reduce youth access, and address tobacco-related health inequalities. Further, adopting thoughtful policies that are consistent applied across the county, is critical to creating sustainable behavior change, reducing confusion for consumers, and supporting parity for retailers serving our community.

At West County Health Centers, we have prioritized support for mental health and long-term addiction in the youth that we serve, this initiative will meaningfully help both. As a physician caring for youth in our community, I strongly encourage you to leverage your political capital to support this important initiative and support generational health impact for our youth.

Once again, thank you for partnering in improving the health of our communities in Sonoma County.

With deep appreciation,

Dr. Jason Cunningham  
Family Physician  
Chief Executive Officer  
West County Health Centers

Administrative Office • P.O. Box 1449, Guerneville, CA 95446 • phone (707) 869-5977 • fax (707) 869-5983 • [www.wchealth.org](http://www.wchealth.org)

Gravenstein Community Health Center • Forestville Teen Clinic • Forestville Wellness Center • Occidental Area Health Center  
Russian River Health Center • Sebastopol Community Health & Dental Center • Third Street House

**From:** [Jill Philpott](#)  
**To:** [\\_CityCouncilListPublic](#); [Alvarez, Eddie](#); [Stapp, Mark](#); [MacDonald, Dianna](#); [Fleming, Victoria](#); [Rogers, Chris](#); [Okrepkie, Jeff](#); [Rogers, Natalie](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Santa Rosa City Council please pass a strong TRL, no e-cigarettes, no exemptions  
**Date:** Friday, May 17, 2024 6:18:19 AM  
**Attachments:** [LetterfromJillPhilpott RN Cityof SR.pdf](#)

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May 17, 2024

To the Honorable Mayor Rogers and Santa Rosa City Council Members, please find my attached letter of support for the strongest TRL possible, a fully ban of all e-cigarette products, no exemptions whatsoever.

Sincerely,

Jill Philpott, RN BSN CDCES

May 16, 2024

To the Honorable Mayor Rogers and Santa Rosa City Council Members,

I am a registered nurse at Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital. I grew up in Santa Rosa, attended Monroe and Binkley elementary schools, Rincon Valley Middle School and completed the nursing program at SRJC after graduating from Santa Rosa High School. My son currently attends High School in Santa Rosa.

I was thrilled to learn the City of Santa Rosa is considering a Tobacco Retail License Ordinance with a full e-cigarette device and product ban.

For me, as a nurse, a diabetes prevention educator, and someone who has had many patients whose health has been compromised or lives eventually ended in connection to tobacco and nicotine addiction, this topic is of great concern.

In reviewing the presentation attached to the agenda for next Tuesday's council meeting I am deeply troubled about the slides on page 8 and 17 which suggest the entertainment of an option to exempt certain products from a city-wide e-cigarette ban. I want to say that while it is unfortunate the FDA has authorized the sale of a few e-cigarette products the FDA says on its own website that authorization should not be confused with such products being "FDA-approved."

Also, respectfully, the slides should emphasize that the FDA continues to state loud and clear "All tobacco products are harmful and potentially addictive. Those who do not use tobacco products shouldn't start." The tobacco industry lobbyists are desperate to grasp onto any straws they can. They are dead set on coercing elected officials to leave the door open for their toxic products. They will fight to leave even the slightest footholds to undermine our cities' progress. Petaluma, Sebastopol, Windsor, now County of Sonoma have banned harmful and addictive e-cigarette products out of neighborhoods. I say harmful and addictive... these are not my words but the warnings of the actual page 16 mentioned product on corporate websites. Please see an assembly of screenshots below my letter where the e-cigarette product websites state very boldly the dangers associated with tobacco products. Might I recommend the city presentation use similar bold warning graphics associated with those cited products on any slide referencing specific e-cigarette products in the future.

From the presentation it mentions a small representation of retailers this week were provided a special forum to learn about the provisions of the ordinance. While I applaud retailer education and community input is important, why was no forum provided to Santa Rosa parents of teen's struggling with e-cigarette use? Why was there no special forum for Santa Rosa physicians and health care specialists? Local health care professionals, especially nurses spend the last moments with people whose lives are cut short from commercial tobacco products. It seems astonishing to me that the input from a handful of retailers warranted the inclusion of two entire slides in the city presentation saying that some vape products could be exempted. To me, due diligence would be to at least include a slide on the science around the dangers of aerosols vapes of any kind Already in 2019, the **American Journal of Preventive Medicine** published the first

long-term study on the dangers of e-cigarettes “Researchers are reporting that the use of e-cigarettes significantly increases a person’s risk of developing chronic lung diseases like asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).” This publication came out five years ago before the global respiratory pandemic claimed millions of lives and hospitals are ever dealing with patients with vulnerable lungs.

[https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/news/2019/first-long-term-study-finds-e-cigarettes-significantly-increase-risk-chronic-lung-disease#:~:text=Researchers%20are%20reporting%20that%20the,obstructive%20pulmonary%20disease%20\(COPD\).](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/news/2019/first-long-term-study-finds-e-cigarettes-significantly-increase-risk-chronic-lung-disease#:~:text=Researchers%20are%20reporting%20that%20the,obstructive%20pulmonary%20disease%20(COPD).)

I have the difficult job of witnessing the final outcome of commercial tobacco- injured hearts and lungs as well as people dying well before their time. As the mother of teenagers, the urgency of protecting youth is especially an emotional one for me. Teens are vaping popular “Elf Bars” that are, in some cases, being sold illegally to them from local stores. They are using devices delivering as much as 560 cigarettes worth of nicotine according to Stanford University dosage diagnostics research. These products are ensuring the next generation of life-long nicotine customers for Big Tobacco which is promoting these products for youth and not even attempting to pretend to be cessation devices. There is no debate over FDA authorized vapes. They are ALL addictive, ALL dangerous, and according to the corporate websites below, not designed as cessation devices.

As you consider the opinions of retailers and tobacco industry lobbyists, please don’t forget us- physicians and nurses. We are at the hospital bedsides of so many in our community that are breathing their last breaths in agony from commercial tobacco use fueled by nicotine addiction.

Sincerely,



Jill Philpott, RN BSN CDCES

FDA:

“All tobacco products are harmful and potentially addictive. Those who do not use tobacco products shouldn’t start.”

Authorization for sale doesn’t equal approval:

“This authorization allows these products to be legally marketed in the U.S. While this action permits these specific products to be sold in the U.S., it does not mean these products are safe nor are they ‘FDA approved.’”

<https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/ctp-newsroom/fda-issues-marketing-decisions-njoy-ace-e-cigarette-products>

- ESDs contain and emit propylene glycol, a chemical that is used as a base in ESD solution and is one of the primary components in the aerosol emitted by ESDs.
  - o Short term exposure causes eye, throat, and airway irritation.
  - o Long term inhalation exposure can result in children developing asthma.

<https://no-smoke.org/electronic-smoking-devices-secondhand-aerosol/>

**Websites of products listed on SR City presentation page 16: VUSE, NJOY, Etc.**





UNDERAGE SALE PROHIBITED

## VAPOR PRODUCTS

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UNDERAGE SALE PROHIBITED

VAPOR PRODUCTS

The diagram illustrates the VUSE device, which consists of a main unit and a power unit. The main unit features a circular LED indicator with four segments: red, orange/yellow, green, and white. A dashed line indicates the sequence of the LED's operation: it starts in the red segment, moves to orange/yellow, then green, and finally to white. Below the LED indicator is a power unit with a sliding switch. The switch has two positions: 'OFF' and 'ON'. The 'ON' position is shown with a green arrow pointing to it, indicating that the device is powered on. The power unit is connected to the main unit by a cable.

OPTION 1	
<b>EVENT</b>	<b>LED Indication</b>
Charge in progress	Solid white ~the USB Charger LED~
Charge complete	White flash 20 times, then light disappears ~the USB Charger LED~

Screen threshold end of power used into charger

OPTION 2	
<b>EVENT</b>	<b>LED Indication</b>
Charge in progress	Red
Charge near complete	Orange/Yellow
Charge complete	Green

Please wait until part end of power used into charger

POWER UNIT GUIDE	
<b>EVENT</b>	<b>LED Indication</b>
Puffing	White fade in, fade out
Low battery	White flash 10 times

Vuse FAQs - We Answer Your V...x

vusevapor.com/footer-links/faq.html

Relaunch to update

# WARNING: This product contains nicotine. Nicotine is an addictive chemical.

UNDERAGE SALE PROHIBITED

VAPOR PRODUCTS

## IS THERE A CALIFORNIA PROP 65 WARNING FOR VUSE PRODUCTS?

Yes. The following Prop 65 warnings apply to Vuse products:

- Vuse Alto, Ciro, Solo and Vibe complete kits and flavor packs:  
⚠️ WARNING: This Product can expose you to chemicals including glycidol, which is known to the state of California to cause cancer, and nicotine, which is known to the State of California to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. For more information go to [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov)
- Vuse Solo and Ciro power units:  
⚠️ WARNING: This Product is intended to be used with Vuse cartridges, which can expose you to chemicals including glycidol, which is known to the state of California to cause cancer, and nicotine, which is known to the State of California to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. For more information go to [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov)
- Vuse Vibe power units:  
⚠️ WARNING: This Product is intended to be used with Vuse tanks, which can expose you to chemicals including glycidol, which is known to the state of California to cause cancer, and nicotine, which is known to the State of California to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. For more information go to [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov)
- Vuse Alto power units:  
⚠️ WARNING: This Product is intended to be used with Vuse pods, which can expose you to chemicals including glycidol, which is known to the state of California to cause cancer, and nicotine, which is known to the State of California to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. For more information go to [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov)

## WHERE CAN I GET INFORMATION FROM THE FDA OR CDC ON THE RECENT REPORTS OF VAPING ILLNESS?

Vuse FAQs - We Answer Your V...x

vusevapor.com/footer-links/faq.html

Relaunch to update

# WARNING: This product contains nicotine. Nicotine is an addictive chemical.

UNDERAGE SALE PROHIBITED

VAPOR PRODUCTS

## WARNINGS & INSTRUCTIONS

### WHAT PRODUCT INFORMATION SHOULD I REVIEW BEFORE USE?

### ARE VUSE PRODUCTS CONSIDERED TOBACCO PRODUCTS?

Yes. The Food and Drug Administration has issued regulations deeming vapor products that contain nicotine extracted from the tobacco plant, and components that work with these products, to be tobacco products. Vuse products are tobacco products because the proprietary liquids used in the Vuse products currently available for sale on this Site are a blend of high quality ingredients, including nicotine extracted from the tobacco plant. No tobacco product is safe or without risk. The long-term health effects of Vuse products are unknown.

### WHO ARE VUSE PRODUCTS INTENDED FOR?

### DO VUSE PRODUCTS CONTAIN NICOTINE?

Yes. The proprietary liquids used in the Vuse products currently available for sale on vuse.com contain nicotine extracted from the tobacco plant. Nicotine is addictive. Nicotine can increase your heart rate and blood pressure and cause dizziness, nausea, and stomach pain.

### WILL INHALATION OF VAPOR AGGRAVATE EXISTING RESPIRATORY CONDITIONS?

Inhalation of vapor may aggravate existing respiratory conditions.

FAQ

logicvapes.co.uk/about-vaping/faq/what-are-the-potential-side-effects

Free delivery on orders over £19.99. Same day dispatch on orders placed before 3pm.

logic.

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WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I GET E-LIQUID IN MY EYES?

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I GET E-LIQUID ON MY SKIN?

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL E-LIQUID SIDE EFFECTS?

Logic E-Liquids contain nicotine. Nicotine is addictive and may temporarily increase blood pressure, heart rate and breathing frequency. Nicotine may also cause loss of balance, pallor, nausea, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, headache, dizziness, disturbed hearing and vision, and weakness.

The e-liquids may cause irritation of the throat. They may also contain ingredients that can cause allergic reactions in sensitive persons, for example: swelling of the face, lips, tongue, gums throat or body, difficulty breathing or wheezing. Please check the list of ingredients on the packaging. Logic E-liquids may also contain trace levels of food allergens, such as nuts, soy, gluten, rapeseed and palm oils.

Discontinue using Logic and any other nicotine products and immediately consult your doctor if you experience any of the above or other adverse reactions. Bring your product leaflet with you.

If you have any questions or concerns, please [contact our Customer Support Team](#).

MY LOGIC VAPE DEVICE IS BROKEN. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY VAPE GETS WET?

Maintenance of device

Device registration

E-liquids and Pods

Flavour

Age Verification



21

## Electronic Smoking Devices

- Only 7 nicotine ESDs are authorized for sale by FDA:
  - NJOY (Altria) – Daily and ACE (+ pod refills)
  - Vuse (R.J. Reynolds) – Ciro and Vibe (+ cartridges, power units)
  - Logic (Japan Tobacco Inter.) – Vapeleaf, Power, and Pro (+ cartridges, chargers)
- Recent FDA enforcement on brick-and-mortar stores have resulted in civil penalties of \$20,000 issued to 20 retailers.
- Localities can fully restrict ESD sales.



**Please DO NOT exempt these 7 products. Their corporate websites state the products contain nicotine and say:**

- Nicotine is an addictive chemical
- the liquid components can be poisonous
- inhalation can cause aggravated respiratory conditions
- products are not smoking cessation products
- as well as other health warnings!!!

Petaluma, Sebastopol, Windsor and County Unincorporated got it right. Santa Rosa needs to join these progressive cities with a full e-cigarette ban, no exemptions, no exceptions.

**From:** Pam Granger  
**To:** CityCouncilListPublic  
**Cc:** Manis, Dina; Smith, Maraskesia; Nutt, Jason  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Tobacco-Free Sonoma supports Santa Rosa TRL  
**Date:** Monday, May 20, 2024 8:30:53 AM  
**Attachments:** image.png  
image.png  
24-05-19 Tobacco-Free LOS SR TRL.pdf

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Tobacco-Free  
Sonoma County  
COMMUNITY COALITION

**Tobacco companies, inhibited by their own negative reputations, have enlisted convenience stores as front groups to oppose evidence-based policies to reduce tobacco use.** Tobacco companies aggressively communicate with retailers, supply them with tools and information to lobby policymakers and provide financial support. (Deadly Alliance 2023 update: [https://assets.tobaccofreekids.org/content/what\\_we\\_do/industry\\_watch/deadly-alliance-2023/2012\\_10\\_12\\_Deadly-Alliance-2023-update.pdf](https://assets.tobaccofreekids.org/content/what_we_do/industry_watch/deadly-alliance-2023/2012_10_12_Deadly-Alliance-2023-update.pdf))

*Santa Rosa parent: "I'm unclear why anyone wants to work so hard to support an industry whose strongest marketing strategy is addiction. Why does anyone want to support the manufacture and sale of products with no socially redeeming qualities. I am unclear as to why anyone would be proud of supporting products that target kids to make money at the expense of their health?"*

**May 19, 2024**

**To: Santa Rosa City Council**

**From: Tobacco-Free Sonoma County Community Coalition**

**Re: Item 16.3 on the May 21, 2024 agenda**

**Dear Mayor Rogers and City Council Members,**

On behalf of Tobacco-Free Sonoma County, I want to thank the Council for an opportunity to provide additional input in support of the tobacco retail license, item 16.3 on the May 21, 2024 agenda and to ask you to pass this policy as presented.

**We want our Santa Rosa tobacco retail policy to make it clear that:**

- **We don't want exceptions.**
- **We don't want ambiguity.**
- **We don't want inconsistency.**
- **We stand UNITED with our neighboring cities and the county unincorporated.**

**The time has finally come.**

This is not a new request. Since 2015, we have inched forward towards our shared goal of reducing the negative impact of commercial tobacco on Santa Rosa residents and our environment by using a broad range of proactive approaches in order to ensure a healthy and safe community and reduce racism and inequality.

**Why is this so important to us?**

Because the best way to reduce the disease and death from commercial tobacco/nicotine use, which is still, by the way, the single largest cause of preventable death in the US, is to ***keep kids from starting in the first place.***

No ONE strategy will keep kids from starting to use (or support those who want to quit) the wide variety of tobacco products offered up with promises of popularity, inclusion, stress relief, etc. That is why Petaluma, Sebastopol, Windsor, and the County Unincorporated have combined proven strategies that interrupt youth access and availability.

They set goals to reduce the overall number of retailers that each use product placement to advertise for Big Tobacco and they keep retail locations away from schools and parks and other youth sensitive locations. Their policies have provisions that include prohibiting the sale of all flavored commercial tobacco products and electronic smoking devices, establishing a minimum pricing and pack size and restricting the use of discounts/coupons because young people are particularly price sensitive.

### **Big Tobacco does not let up**

To remain profitable, the tobacco industry must hook each new generation on their products. Until recently, they were losing ground, but e-cigarettes provided them a new opportunity to engage our youth with appealing flavors, customizable vape devices and a strong social media presence.

California voters passed Prop 31 restricting the sale of most flavored commercial tobacco/nicotine products and Big Tobacco responded with the release of synthetic nicotine, heat not burn cigarettes, and pouches like Zyn, in an effort to circumvent California regulations.

### **We can't compromise!**

You have heard it before and the facts are irrefutable. Tobacco/nicotine is costly to the taxpayers and the economy, costly to our health, costly to historically and currently marginalized communities, and costly to our environment.

Over the years, Santa Rosa's City Council has done much to improve the community's health by passing policies that provide secondhand smoke protections. Sadly, in the absence of regulating the retail segment, there has been a proliferation of smoke and vape shops conveniently located near schools, the public library and the Santa Rosa Mall and at most of the main arteries. ***This growth was not spread evenly, but concentrated in select districts, perpetuating health inequities.***

**We don't want to delay. We don't want to have any more meetings. We don't want ever increasing lists. FDA authorization to sell is not the same as a health approval - We don't want to sell more addictive products in Santa Rosa than in other jurisdictions.**

### **Protecting the environment**

And if protecting youth and improving health equity are not enough reason to further regulate tobacco/vape sales, protecting the environment is one more consideration. Reducing tobacco use as a strategy to protect the environment has been growing in importance worldwide.

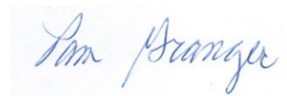
Tobacco product waste contains all the toxins, nicotine, and carcinogens found in tobacco products, along with the plastic non-biodegradable filter attached to almost all cigarettes sold in the United States and in most countries worldwide. E-cigarette waste is potentially a more serious environmental threat than cigarette butts, since e-cigarettes introduce plastic, nicotine salts, heavy metals, lead, mercury, and flammable lithium-ion batteries into waterways soil and to wildlife.

## **Drought and Fire**

Want more reasons? Drought and fire have been a large part of the Santa Rosa experience. Although our recent big fires have not been as a result of smoking, studies indicate smoking is a leading cause of fires and residential fire deaths in California. Reducing purchases reduces fire odds in Santa Rosa.

**We hope you agree that passing a Tobacco Retail License (TRL) which provides a system for enforcement and regulates the location of tobacco retailers near youth sensitive locations can play an important role in reducing environmental waste and fire damage and help to reduce youth uptake while improving health equity by ending predatory industry marketing practices in our communities.**

With best regards,



Pam Granger, chair

Tobacco-Free Sonoma County Community Coalition

### **We want to remind you of a few supporters:**

- Action on Smoking & Health (ASH)
- Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy, and Leadership (APPEAL)
- Aliados Health
- Center for Well-Being
- Santa Rosa Community Health
- Gravenstein Health Action
- Petaluma Health Center
- Ruth E. Malone, RN, PhD, University of California San Francisco
- Sierra Club
- Tobacco-Free Sonoma County Community Coalition
- Blue Zone Project
- California Health Collaborative
- Ceres Community Project
- Providence Medical Group
- Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa
- Community Action Partner-ship of Sonoma County
- Dr. Lauren Gritzer, Dentist
- First 5 Sonoma County
- Child Parent Institute
- Dr. Jeff Miller, Pediatrician
- Sonoma County Office of Education
- American Lung Association
- American Heart Association\*
- American Cancer Society/Cancer Action Network\*
- Santa Rosa Health Action
- Santa Rosa City Schools representatives



**Tobacco companies, inhibited by their own negative reputations, have enlisted convenience stores as front groups to oppose evidence-based policies to reduce tobacco use.** Tobacco companies aggressively communicate with retailers, supply them with tools and information to lobby policymakers and provide financial support. (Deadly Alliance 2023 update:

[https://assets.tobaccofreekids.org/content/what\\_we\\_do/industry\\_watch/deadly-alliance-2023/2012\\_10\\_12\\_Deadly-Alliance-2023-update.pdf](https://assets.tobaccofreekids.org/content/what_we_do/industry_watch/deadly-alliance-2023/2012_10_12_Deadly-Alliance-2023-update.pdf) )

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No ONE strategy will keep kids from starting to use (or support those who want to quit) the wide variety of tobacco products offered up with promises of popularity, inclusion, stress relief, etc. That is why Petaluma, Sebastopol, Windsor, and the County Unincorporated have combined proven strategies that interrupt youth access and availability.

They set goals to reduce the overall number of retailers that each use product placement to advertise for Big Tobacco and they keep retail locations away from schools and parks and other youth sensitive locations. Their policies have provisions that include prohibiting the sale of all flavored commercial tobacco products and electronic smoking devices, establishing a minimum pricing and pack size and restricting the use of discounts/coupons because young people are particularly price sensitive.

### **Big Tobacco does not let up**

To remain profitable, the tobacco industry must hook each new generation on their products. Until recently, they were losing ground, but e-cigarettes provided them a new opportunity to engage our youth with appealing flavors, customizable vape devices and a strong social media presence.

California voters passed Prop 31 restricting the sale of most flavored commercial tobacco/nicotine products and Big Tobacco responded with the release of synthetic nicotine, heat not burn cigarettes, and pouches like Zyn, in an effort to circumvent California regulations.

### **We can't compromise!**

You have heard it before and the facts are irrefutable. Tobacco/nicotine is costly to the taxpayers and the economy, costly to our health, costly to historically and currently marginalized communities, and costly to our environment.

Over the years, Santa Rosa's City Council has done much to improve the community's health by passing policies that provide secondhand smoke protections. Sadly, in the absence of regulating the retail segment, there has been a proliferation of smoke and vape shops conveniently located near schools, the public library and the Santa Rosa Mall and at most of the main arteries. ***This growth was not spread evenly, but concentrated in select districts, perpetuating health inequities.***

**We don't want to delay. We don't want to have any more meetings. We don't want ever increasing lists. FDA authorization to sell is not the same as a health approval - We don't want to sell more addictive products in Santa Rosa than in other jurisdictions.**

## Protecting the environment

And if protecting youth and improving health equity are not enough reason to further regulate tobacco/vape sales, protecting the environment is one more consideration. Reducing tobacco use as a strategy to protect the environment has been growing in importance worldwide.

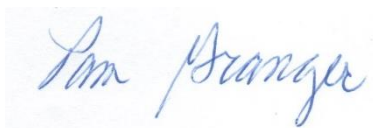
Tobacco product waste contains all the toxins, nicotine, and carcinogens found in tobacco products, along with the plastic non-biodegradable filter attached to almost all cigarettes sold in the United States and in most countries worldwide. E-cigarette waste is potentially a more serious environmental threat than cigarette butts, since e-cigarettes introduce plastic, nicotine salts, heavy metals, lead, mercury, and flammable lithium-ion batteries into waterways soil and to wildlife.

## Drought and Fire

Want more reasons? Drought and fire have been a large part of the Santa Rosa experience. Although our recent big fires have not been as a result of smoking, studies indicate smoking is a leading cause of fires and residential fire deaths in California. Reducing purchases reduces fire odds in Santa Rosa.

**We hope you agree that passing a Tobacco Retail License (TRL) which provides a system for enforcement and regulates the location of tobacco retailers near youth sensitive locations can play an important role in reducing environmental waste and fire damage and help to reduce youth uptake while improving health equity by ending predatory industry marketing practices in our communities.**

With best regards,



Pam Granger, chair  
Tobacco-Free Sonoma County Community Coalition

## We want to remind you of a few supporters:

- Action on Smoking & Health (ASH)
- Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy, and Leadership (APPEAL)
- Aliados Health
- Center for Well-Being
- Santa Rosa Community Health
- Gravenstein Health Action
- Petaluma Health Center
- Ruth E. Malone, RN, PhD, University of California San Francisco
- Sierra Club
- Tobacco-Free Sonoma County Community Coalition
- Blue Zone Project
- California Health Collaborative
- Ceres Community Project
- Providence Medical Group
- Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa
- Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County
- Dr. Lauren Gritzer, Dentist
- First 5 Sonoma County
- Child Parent Institute
- Dr. Jeff Miller, Pediatrician
- Sonoma County Office of Education
- American Lung Association
- American Heart Association\*
- American Cancer Society/Cancer Action Network\*
- Santa Rosa Health Action
- Santa Rosa City Schools representatives



**From:** [Greg Damron](#)  
**To:** [CityCouncilListPublic](#); [Alvarez, Eddie](#); [Stapp, Mark](#); [MacDonald, Dianna](#); [Fleming, Victoria](#); [Rogers, Chris](#); [Okrepie, Jeff](#); [Rogers, Natalie](#)  
**Cc:** [Pam Granger](#); [MMcGarry@nccwb.org](mailto:MMcGarry@nccwb.org)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Please pass a strong TRL in Santa Rosa banning all e-cigarette products like Petaluma, Sebastopol, Windsor, and County Unincorporated  
**Date:** Monday, May 20, 2024 10:20:07 AM  
**Attachments:** [TRL Support.pdf](#)  
[Santa Rosans Ask for a TRL.pdf](#)  
[City of Santa Rosa Feb2022.pdf](#)  
[LettersofSupportNov2023.pdf](#)  
[2022-002-002\\_SRHAC\\_PortraitofSonoma.pdf](#)  
[2023 Trinity County Tobacco Retailer Education Materials 2023.pdf](#)

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### **Mayor Rogers and Santa Rosa City Council Members,**

The Tobacco-Free Sonoma County Coalition, Santa Rosa TRL Workgroup, Hearts of Sonoma, nurses, doctors, dentists, youth, grandparents, parents, teachers, school administrators across the City of Santa Rosa are asking for a Tobacco Retail License Ordinance with strict provisions and a full ban on all cigarette products being sold in a licensed commercial tobacco establishment.

We know regulation is going to be opposed by some retailers. The burden of business of convenience store and corner “mom and pop” markets in Santa Rosa is not to be underestimated. This is especially true for those independent or smaller chains that have in some cases been part of the neighborhood fabric and character across the city for close to a century. These stores do not have the infrastructure and support of major national franchises like 7-Eleven and Circle K. All convenience store operators though will probably agree that over the past five years the retail landscape has faced major challenges both nationally and locally.

#### **Challenges of the marketplace facing some of our local convenience store retailers:**

- Customer habits and preferences continue to evolve and capturing loyal customers in a rapidly changing retail environment is not easy.
- Online delivery services have become formidable competitors keeping customers out of brick- and-mortar spaces.
- Supply chain impacts by Covid-19 have left a mark even years after the pandemic has subsided.
- The cost of doing business continues to rise with inflation and customers are faced with trading convenience for more value-offering retail options.
- Rising leases, rents and property prices and insurance continue to be prohibitive to access to more favorable locations/business expansion.
- Impact on the “bottom line” caused by theft rise and rise.
- Impact of customers going elsewhere because of concerns of crime and other issues in some neighborhoods continues.
- Store clerks and staff are sometimes the victims of xenophobic and racial-ethnic harassment and targeting.

Since 2016 up to the present with County of Sonoma’s passage of a stronger TRL last week, we

have noticed that Local Tobacco-Control Ordinances create rare opportunities for forums for small business owners to channel and air frustrations. TRLs provide a chance for retailers to share with you about their broader challenges of running convenience stores. Unfortunately, tobacco lobbyists manipulate retailer challenges to design a “catch-all” scenario that both hyper-inflates the role of commercial tobacco as indispensable to local convenience stores and that ANY suggestion of regulation will damage or kill businesses, create unfair competition. Time and time again we have witnessed long-range, diversely supported community health campaigns form and flourish for years, with grassroots volunteers invested demonstrating over the long haul how commercial tobacco is ravishing the community interrupted by Big Tobacco. And then, we have watched how easily a simple convenience store retailer tee-shirt campaign, typically with a small representation of actual store owners can suddenly dominate the conversation.

### **Local Convenience Store Owners Need Your Support- Just not the Support Big Tobacco Wants from You**

I have been working to address Santa Rosa commercial tobacco retailing for ten years. I worked with the late Vince Harper and CAP Sonoma’s Dig Youth on neighborhood tobacco retailing. Later I worked for the County Department of Health Services doing tobacco code enforcement, youth purchase surveys, decoy operation trainings, and healthy store surveys. Over the years I have had the privilege of having good conversations with a number of Santa Rosa convenience store owners. One thing that has struck me over the years is how disconnected many stores seemed from the trajectory of progressive business-ethos in Santa Rosa. Years ago, I had the privilege of working under a grant with SRPD participating in neighborhood forums addressing DUI prevention and healthy retail. More recently, as I ran Young Adult Tobacco Purchase surveys in Santa Rosa, I noticed that so many convenience stores seemed trapped in the last century with marketing practices that mismatched Santa Rosa’s vision for a healthier community.

A couple of years ago in a conversation with Peter Rumble, CEO of the Santa Rosa Metro Chamber, I was surprised and not surprised to learn that there was no substantial membership by tobacco retailers in the Chamber. A recent check of their membership last week says this must still be the case. Based on prior conversations with tobacco retailers, I understand that a number of convenience store owners in stay in touch through Ad Hoc networks, possibly affiliated with informal immigrant community and/or religious groups. These informal networks appear to be where information is shared, and activism occasionally occurs. Unfortunately, it appears some of these networks might be exploited by Big Tobacco, whose tactic is to bring corporate advocacy to the neighborhood level. In a community where adult cigarette use has been on a steady decline, where healthy retail is highly valued, how else can we explain the dissonance between Santa Rosa’s health and equity goals and the jarring and shocking demands of Big Tobacco who coerce convenience stores to promote

industry misinformation and talking (deception) points.

**Santa Rosa Retailers Need More Forums to Address their Business Challenges that Aren't Tobacco-Related and Support to Level-Up to Santa Rosa's Vision for a Healthier more Equitable Community for All**

An over-arching purpose of Blue Zones Project is to help neighborhoods (where our health and our longevity is substantially determined) to advocate for the healthier choice to be the easier choice. As someone who was born and grew up in Santa Rosa and who has been doing healthy retail activism here for many years, I implore City Council when you hear claims that regulation will hurt convenience stores to know, clearly that Big Tobacco wants our neighborhood stores to prioritize profits on the lowest common denominator of human vulnerability to addiction. Over and over again we hear convenience store owners say they care about the community, they have kids they don't want using the products they sell, but their quest to achieve the "American Dream" will be smashed. We hear claims that any suggestion that they should listen to widespread community calls for compliance, accountability, and responsibility with regards to protecting youth from nicotine addiction is unjust.

Santa Rosa retailers need encouragement to innovate and shift to retail models that are evidence-based to be healthier and promote more community prosperity as opposed to products that maim and kill customers. Let's work together to help retailers find resources to get deadly products out of their stores and a model for retailing not imposed on them by Big Tobacco. I am attaching some resources that address Big Tobacco arguments opposing regulation as well as former letters of support that have been sent to City Council over the past couple of years. Please find a resource page created for Trinity County retailers. It's a completely different marketplace but an example of something our local convenience stores might need to flip the script on Big Tobacco's insistence they have to rely on commercial tobacco sales. I've also included some slides from a 2022 presentation to Health Action on the health equity and tobacco retailing density differences across Santa Rosa.

Thank you for your leadership and ensuring a healthy and safe community for all and ensuring the public's safety by engaging residents and using a broad range of proactive approaches that reduces racism and inequity in our community. A Strong TRL will help us all reach these important goals.

Greg Damron

Greg Damron MPA, Public Policy Advocate



**Blue Zones Project**

Making healthy choices easier.

Nov 7, 2023  
Santa Rosa City Council  
100 Santa Rosa Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Dear Mayor Rogers and City Council Members,

I am writing to express my support for a Tobacco Retail License Ordinance (TRL) that includes a nicotine e-cigarette device and product ban for City of Santa Rosa. I am a cardiac/neuro RN at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital, and a Santa Rosa resident in District 1. I am a Montgomery High School graduate. When I was in High School, our generation was one of first impacted by the teen vaping epidemic thanks to JUUL's marketing to teens starting around 2017. Vaping was rampant at my High School and later by many students at SRJC. It was known that underage teens could get e-cigarettes in local Santa Rosa stores. Many would ask of-age young adults to purchase e-cigarettes for them as well, so it became very easy to obtain a vape at any time, for any age. As a nurse, I've come full circle to not only have experienced the vaping epidemic, but I am now treating my young adult peers who are experiencing devastating health conditions directly related to vaping. In the past year I've had 3 patients in their 20s with collapsed lungs, and consequently chest tubes, that are directly correlated to chronic vaping. I am pleased the City Council will meet on November 14th agenda to discuss a Tobacco Retail License Ordinance (TRL). We need to ban vapes, just as Petaluma, Windsor, Sebastopol have banned e-cigarette products and devices. The vaping epidemic is something people often like to ignore. Nurses and doctors in our community don't have that luxury. Please regulate commercial tobacco with a local ordinance and ban these dangerous e-cigarette products. I am 25 years of age, and do not want to have to treat another patient my age or younger for detrimental respiratory conditions due to vaping.

Sincerely,

Jaylin Hals

## **It's time to Re-Set the Conversation**

We know that running a small business can be difficult. But the struggle of being an entrepreneur in Santa Rosa doesn't justify lowering standards to accommodate a small number of business owners at the expense of public safety and health equity in Santa Rosa.

Big Tobacco corporations are actively working in Sonoma County these days deceptively trying to frame the situation as convenience store owners being victimized by the requests of community health advocacy. Big Tobacco's propaganda play book is to twist community calls for more accountability and responsibility from retailers as an infringement on retailers' rights. They spend millions of dollars and brings lobbyists into local communities to run what appears to be grassroots campaigns and even pose as supporters of community health and public safety. There is no common ground to compromise between Big Tobacco's misinformation, corporate propaganda, lies and Santa Rosa community members' mandates for health equity and community safety.

Because tobacco companies have huge budgets to win special forums and prominent platforms for their profit-centric cause, it can be hard to sift through the "noise" when Big Tobacco trying to dominate the debate. The following is meant to "re-set" the conversation back to what the broader community wants, not what Big Tobacco wants for Santa Rosa.

### **Tobacco has been underregulated for decades. Santa Rosans want that to change.**

Santa Rosa community members including convenience-store customers and neighbors, health workers, youth, parents and educators and environmental advocates are asking City Council to support responsible retailing.

- Since 2016, jurisdictions that have considered Tobacco Retail License Ordinances in County Unincorporated, Petaluma, Sebastopol and Windsor and now Santa Rosa have provided rare forums for convenience store owners to air and channel their general frustrations in front of elected officials.
- Retailers say more regulation is too hard. Big Tobacco is telling retailers to fight for ease by opposing tobacco regulation. Big Tobacco claims tobacco regulation over-burdens retailers.

*Big Tobacco coaches retailers to tie unregulated tobacco as the absolute salvation for their struggling businesses. Meanwhile, there is no example of any retailer in the region being forced out of business because of TRLs, certain banned products, or other restrictions based on a local TRL being passed. Not one retailer in Sonoma County- especially Petaluma, Sebastopol, Town of Windsor have reported having lost their business because of a local, even strict TRL.*

## **A Tobacco Retail License in Santa Rosa empowers the community to take more responsibility for the sales of deadly and addictive products in our neighborhoods.**

State and Federal enforcement is not sufficient with the high rates of sales by local stores to underage purchasers.

- County Health Department-administered Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey (YATPS) operations over the past seven years has demonstrated high rates of sales. Sales have been consistently high in City of Santa Rosa. A number of transactions occurred in Santa Rosa during these operations where cashiers checked ID, saw that the teen was not old enough to buy and still sold.
- Tobacco-Free Sonoma County Community Coalition has engaged SRPD at the request from Santa Rosa parents whose teenagers were buying large numbers of vapes at multiple downtown smoke shops, including hundreds of dollars documented on receipts.
- Community education across the city has led to youth and parents expressing outrage at how easy their children and peers are able to access e-cigarette products in neighborhood stores.
- FDA and CA Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) run intermittent store inspections and decoy operations in Santa Rosa. These operations are not regular enough and do not result in substantial fines or other incentives for Santa Rosa stores to comply. While there are compliant stores who factually claim they don't sell to teens, the sales rates are too high generally for tobacco lobbyists' claims that a TRL isn't necessary.

*When local communities call for retailer accountability, it is based on evidence: Community input, surveillance-data, surveys as well as parent, youth, teacher and school administrator calls for action. Data shows how under-regulated commercial tobacco retailing is in Santa Rosa without a local TRL and why a TRL is necessary.*

## **Selling a pizza roll on Santa Rosa Ave currently requires more regulatory compliance than what retailers have to do to sell a high-nicotine dosage vape. Asking for a TRL to improve responsible retailing to protect kids isn't asking too much.**

Big Tobacco indoctrinates sellers that their right for ease is more important than community health and teen safety. When Santa Rosans ask for TRLs, we're not hurting retailers and we're not asking too much. Big Tobacco is only concerned about corporate windfall profits.

- Without a TRL tobacco retailing provides retailers with one of the easier and appealing products to manage in their inventory. It's highly addictive so it locks in long-term, faithful customers. Addictive products are **conveniently** located at gas stations and neighborhood locations and often easy for teens to buy.

- Distributors whisk in and out managing inventory on behalf of store owners so it is a product that requires less work to manage in store than other products. Often tobacco sellers benefit from contracts or are offered subsidies and other benefits that can be financially lucrative. Retailers will often not divulge that their real profit margin is not based on the customer buying the \$1.99 pack of little cigars, but a subsidy provided by tobacco companies.
- When communities ask for a TRL it can disrupt the “easy money” experience for retailers. Without a TRL when rules are broken, consequences to retailers are negligible. Accountability can be hard to adjust to but it’s the price of selling dangerous addictive products.
- Despite arguing otherwise, convenience store owner claims that regulating the sale of addictive and deadly products will force them out of business. Meanwhile, based on their longevity in our neighborhoods’ convenience stores are an adaptable, innovative, and resilient retail environment. E-cigarettes were not popular ten years ago and more or less absent in convenience store retailing. Ten years ago many convenience stores sold pornography. Now pornography has long been phased out of stores and energy drinks have expanded. Products rise and fall with popularity or when community’s say “enough is enough.”

*Good News! Maintaining an alcohol sales license and food permit license are excellent practices convenience store owners are already familiar with. Santa Rosans want convenience stores to be more responsible with tobacco retailing just like they’re already required to follow stricter rules for selling beer or snacks.*

**Big Tobacco wants TRLs to be framed as an adversarial situation. Rather TRLs are an opportunity for convenience stores to level-up and be more progressive in supporting Santa Rosa’s goals to:**

- **Ensure a healthy and safe community for all.**
- **Ensure the public's safety by engaging residents and using a broad range of proactive approaches that reduces racism and inequity in our community.**

State and Federal enforcement is not sufficient with the high rates of sales by local stores to underage purchasers. Some of our city’s most vibrant small markets are immigrant-owned, thriving and providing healthier options for the community. Big Tobacco opposes TRLs as retailers’ rights vs. government overreach. False dichotomies aside, it’s time to support convenience stores to become less dependent on tobacco sales. It’s literally a DYING market.

- County Health Department-administered Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Survey (YATPS) operations over the past seven years has demonstrated high rates of sales. Sales have been consistently high in City of Santa Rosa. A number of transactions occurred in Santa Rosa during these operations where cashiers checked ID, saw that the teen was not old enough to buy and still sold.

- The tobacco industry has been targeting Santa Rosa's most vulnerable neighborhoods for years by over-marketing and proliferating addictive, deadly products in some neighborhoods like Roseland while being curiously absent around more affluent neighborhoods near Fountain Grove, Montecito Heights, Rincon Valley's Skyhawk development, and parts of Bennet Valley.
- The 2014 Portrait of Sonoma and its recent update specifically calls out health and lifespan inequities between Bennet Valley and Roseland. When you map the high density of tobacco retailing in Roseland compared to Bennet Valley, we see how the physical reality of retail density coincides with these disparities.
- Big Tobacco spends \$1Million dollars an hour to do deep market assessment on where to concentrate its products, how much to discount them and how to encourage retailers to do product placement that maximizes teen addiction and thus create new customers to replace those whose health they've damaged and lives they've prematurely ended.

*Santa Rosans are calling for a TRL because we want our community to walk the talk on our City's goals to: Ensure a healthy and safe community for all and Ensure the public's safety by engaging residents and using a broad range of proactive approaches that reduces racism and inequity in our community. We say no to Big Tobacco profiting off health inequities between our more affluent and less advantaged neighborhoods. We need a TRL to help address the #1 cause of preventable disease and death in Santa Rosa which is commercial tobacco use.*



February 17, 2022

Santa Rosa City Council  
City Hall  
100 Santa Rosa Ave  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

**Subject: Request for Tobacco Retail License Ordinance Amendment**

Mayor Rogers and members of the City Council,

I would like to express my appreciation to the Santa Rosa City Council's ongoing efforts to help improve health outcomes in our community. I write today to encourage the council to consider adding a tobacco retail license policy to the City's 2022 goals to address the rapid increase in vaping among Santa Rosa youth. Data clearly demonstrates the serious threat vaping poses to the immediate and long-term health of young people. Data also shows that teens who use e-cigarettes are more likely to progress to smoking cigarettes increasing the serious health risks associated with smoking any tobacco products including death.

Providence Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital supports Hearts of Sonoma County (HSC), an initiative developed more than seven years ago by Health Action's Committee for Health Care Improvement. HSC's goal is to prevent heart attacks and strokes—the leading causes of premature death and disability in Sonoma County—through prevention, early detection, and better management of chronic health conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and obesity. Smoking is a significant risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Working collaboratively with health systems, hospitals, clinics, medical technology, and community-based organizations, HSC has successfully improved blood pressure control—a key step in reducing deaths from heart attacks and strokes.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), youth are more likely than adults to use e-cigarettes. In Sonoma County in 2017-2018, 21.7 percent of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 26.5 percent of 11<sup>th</sup> graders reported using e-cigarettes in the past 30 days. Among alternative school students, the number was 49.3 percent. This epidemic in vaping is driven by the marketing of flavored tobacco products as well as misunderstanding among youth about the danger of these products.

Tobacco use in any form remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death and is directly responsible for one in five deaths nationally. In Sonoma County, tobacco use is responsible for an estimated 503 deaths annually, representing 13 percent of total annual deaths.

The recent rapid increase in vaping among young people threatens to undo decades-long reductions in smoking and tobacco use, with devastating consequences for the long-term health of this generation, our healthcare sector, and our community.

We are most effective in addressing this serious threat to young people's lives when we work together. Changes in public policy are among the most effective approaches to achieve optimal health outcomes for county residents. Providence Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital strongly urges you to consider policy options to reduce and/or prevent vaping and tobacco use in youth. Specifically, please consider adopting a tobacco retail license to include a flavored tobacco and e-cigarette sales ban consistent with that implemented by the cities of Sebastopol, Sonoma, and the Town of Windsor. Developing consistent policies across all municipalities and the County of Sonoma is important if we are to succeed in addressing the epidemic of youth vaping.

Thank you for your leadership in protecting the health of our community's youth.

Sincerely,



**Chuck Kassis, Chief Executive**

Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital

1165 Montgomery Drive

Santa Rosa, CA 95405

**From:** [Jenny Bard](#)  
**To:** [Rogers, Chris](#)  
**Cc:** [City Clerk](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] A strong tobacco retailer license will protect our kids  
**Date:** Sunday, November 12, 2023 10:11:46 PM

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Hi Chris,

Thanks for your support on a strong tobacco retailer license (TRL) for the City of Santa Rosa. Having worked for the American Lung Association for 24 years and seen the ravages of tobacco use on generations of families, this issue is especially personal for me. As you noted, it is long past time for Santa Rosa to step up as other jurisdictions have done to protect our kids from the harms of tobacco use and nicotine addiction.

Petaluma, Windsor and Sebastopol have all passed a health protective TRL. The county is about to as well. As a resident with grandchildren in Santa Rosa, I want Santa Rosa to have the same protections for our kids!

Even though we passed a state law (SB 793) to ban flavored tobacco products in California stores, it was an unfunded mandate and Santa Rosa has been unable to enforce it. The fee charged for a TRL would provide the funds for enforcement and a MOU with the county's Impact Sonoma team to implement the law. This is a win-win proposal for Santa Rosa and levels the playing field for those retailers who are abiding by the rules.

Thank you so much for all you do for Santa Rosa. I look forward to seeing you again soon.

Jenny Bard

Luther Burbank Gardens neighborhood

Santa Rosa

**From:** [Cathryn Couch](#)  
**To:** [\\_CityCouncilListPublic](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Tobacco Retail License  
**Date:** Monday, November 13, 2023 10:06:45 AM  
**Attachments:** [11.9.23\\_HSC LOS for Santa Rosa TRL.pdf](#)

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Dear Santa Rosa City Council,

Please find the attached letter from Hearts of Sonoma County urging you to adopt a Tobacco Retail License for the city of Santa Rosa that bans flavored tobacco and e-cigarette products. Thank you.

*Warmly,*

*Cathryn*



Cathryn Couch  
*Pronouns:* [She/Her](#)  
**[CERES COMMUNITY PROJECT](#)**  
Chief Executive Officer  
[707.829.5833 x132](#)



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HEARTS OF SONOMA COUNTY  
MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS:

November 13, 2023

Aliados Health

American Heart Association of  
the North Bay

Carium

Ceres Community Project

Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa

Northern California Center for  
Well-Being

Partnership HealthPlan of  
California

Healthy Petaluma

Petaluma Health Center

Santa Rosa Community Health

Sutter Santa Rosa Family  
Medicine Residency

Providence Medical Group

Providence Community Health  
Programs

Sonoma County Department of  
Health Services

Sutter Medical Group of the  
Redwoods

Tobacco Free Sonoma County  
Community Coalition

Dear Santa Rosa City Council,

Hearts of Sonoma County (HSC) is reaching out to urge your support for a city-wide tobacco retail license (TRL) banning flavored tobacco and e-cigarette sales. Such a ban would match those already passed in Sebastopol, Petaluma and Windsor, and hopefully a county-wide TRL.

We urge the city council to consider the long-term health of Santa Rosa and Sonoma County youth which is at risk from the alarming increases in use of these products over the past few years. Vaping represents a serious threat to the immediate and long-term health of these young people, including hospitalization, permanent lung damage, and even death. In addition, teens who use e-cigarettes are more likely to progress to smoking cigarettes in the future, with all the health risks this entails.<sup>i</sup>

**For this reason, we urge the City Council to approve a tobacco retail license (TRL) that includes bans on flavored tobacco and e-cigarette sales.**

Hearts of Sonoma County is an initiative launched in 2014 with the goal to prevent heart attacks and strokes—leading causes of premature death and disability in Sonoma County—through prevention, earlier detection, and better management of chronic health conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and obesity. **Nicotine use is a key risk factor for hypertension and cardiovascular disease.** Working collaboratively with health systems, hospitals, community health centers, medical technology companies such as Medtronic and Carium, and community-based organizations, HSC has successfully contributed to improving adult blood pressure control in Sonoma County—a key step in reducing premature deaths from heart attacks and strokes.<sup>ii</sup>

**We know that nicotine addiction often originates in adolescence with studies showing that close to 90% of adult daily smokers started before the age of 18, and that teens are more susceptible to nicotine addiction.**<sup>iii</sup> According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), youth are more likely than adults to use e-cigarettes. The updated

The vision of Hearts of Sonoma County is to reduce heart attacks and strokes as a major killer of people in Sonoma County. Hearts of Sonoma County is improving cardiovascular disease prevention and management through active collaboration across healthcare organizations, community and social service partners, and community members to inspire good health and achieve health equity.



2022 “Monitoring the Future” National Survey shows that 7% of 8th graders, 14% of 10th graders, and 21% of 12th graders have vaped nicotine in the past 30 days.<sup>iv</sup> Puff Bar is the most popular vaping product. One Puff Bar contains as much nicotine as at least 50 cigarettes.<sup>v</sup>

**Local data reflect these disturbing national trends. In Sonoma County in January 2023, 8% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 13% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders reported using e-cigarettes recently. Among alternative school students, the number was 30%.** This epidemic in vaping is driven by the marketing of flavored tobacco products as well as misunderstanding among youth about the danger of these products.<sup>vi</sup>

Nicotine use in any form remains the single largest *preventable* cause of disease and premature death and is directly responsible for one in five deaths nationally.<sup>vii</sup> In Sonoma County, tobacco use is responsible for an estimated 503 deaths annually, representing 13% of total annual deaths.<sup>viii</sup>

The recent rapid increase in vaping among young people threatens to undo decades-long reductions in smoking and tobacco use, with devastating consequences for the long-term health of this generation, our healthcare sector, and our community.

Changes in public policy are among the most effective approaches to achieve optimal health outcomes for county residents. Considering current alarming trends, HSC strongly urges you to adopt policies to reduce and prevent vaping and tobacco use in youth. Please consider establishing a Santa Rosa tobacco retail license (TRL) that include bans on flavored tobacco and e-cigarette sales. While a ban on flavored tobacco sales and e-cigarettes is now the law in California (Senate Bill 793), the law has a known loophole that enables youth to continue to access these products: local enforcement is only accessible via criminal infraction. A Santa Rosa TRL would provide the local means for responding to violations of this ban by enabling suspension or revocation of retail licensing as well as assessment of fines.

***Hearts of Sonoma County also recommends allocating funds to develop and implement a robust, countywide tobacco and nicotine prevention education campaign aimed at both young people and their parents as a counterforce to tobacco marketing.***

Thank you for protecting and championing the lifelong health of today’s Sonoma County youth.

Sincerely,

Hearts of Sonoma County Leadership Team on behalf of HSC members

Beth Paul  
Population Health Director  
Aliados Health

Regional Medical Director  
Quality and Population Health  
Providence Medical Group

Monica Ferguson MD MSPH

Kayla Flores Tindall MD MPH

Family Medicine, Kaiser Permanente La Clinica  
Faculty, Community Medicine Rotation Director  
Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa

Karissa Moreno MA  
Executive Director  
Northern California Center for Well-Being

Cathryn Couch  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ceres Community Project

Lori Houston  
Community Health Planning Analyst  
Sonoma County Department of Health Services

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<sup>i</sup> Rand Corporation (2018): <https://www.rand.org/news/press/2018/10/02.html>

<sup>ii</sup> Cheadle A, Rosaschi M, Burden D, Ferguson M, Greaves B, Houston L, et al. A Community-Wide Collaboration to Reduce Cardiovascular Disease Risk: The Hearts of Sonoma County Initiative. *Prev Chronic Dis* 2019;16:180596. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd16.180596>

<sup>iii</sup> Kong G, Krishnan-Sarin S. A call to end the epidemic of adolescent E-cigarette use. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*. 2017;174:215–221. doi: 10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2017.03.001. [PMC free article] [PubMed]

<sup>iv</sup> Monitoring the Future Survey 2022: <https://monitoringthefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/mtf2022.pdf>

<sup>v</sup> Stanford Prevention Toolkit, <https://med.stanford.edu/content/dam/sm/tobaccopreventiontoolkit/documents/ecigarettes/Cigs-in-a-Pod.pdf>

<sup>vi</sup> Hong, H., Addictive Behaviors, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2018.11.020>

<sup>vii</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014 [accessed 2018 Feb 22].

<sup>viii</sup> Source: Calculated using CDC methodology for Smoking Attributable Mortality, Sonoma County DHS; CHIS 2012-2016 pooled estimates; CDHP, CCDF 2012-2016 deaths; CPS-II(82-88)

**From:** [Greg Damron](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#); [Rogers, Natalie](#); [Pam Granger](#); [Michelle McGarry](#); [Evette Minor](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: Agenda Item Number (4.2) Tues. Nov. 14th Study Session Tobacco Retail License Ordinance Consideration  
**Date:** Monday, November 13, 2023 11:05:48 AM  
**Attachments:** [2023 SantaRosaTRL CouncilAppeal.pdf](#)

---

Please find attached appeal to Santa Rosa City Council to adopt a TRL.

-Greg Damron



11/13/2023

Honorable Mayor Rogers and the Santa Rosa City Council Members,

Over the past six years I have served in roles on the Department of Health Services tobacco-prevention team- Impact Sonoma and the Tobacco-Free Sonoma County Coalition (TFSCCC) to fight teen nicotine initiation in Santa Rosa. I and the teams I've served on have worked diligently across Santa Rosa Council Districts, neighborhoods and School Districts at the urgent request from school administrators (SR City Schools and SCOE), teachers, school Resource Officers as well as students, parents, health educators and medical professionals. By 2019, outraged parents and educators and concerned youth from a number of Santa Rosa campuses began to demand clear action to help bring better commercial tobacco regulation into Santa Rosa. TFSCCC began mobilizing in early 2020 and over the next couple of years our stakeholders groups have engaged City Council. You have heard from a broad base of medical institutions and networks and health advocacy organizations and education stakeholders including:

- Center for Well-Being
- Hearts of Sonoma
- Providence, Memorial Hospital
- Sonoma County Office of Education
- Various representatives from Santa Rosa City Schools
- Local Youth and Young Adults from across campuses from Maria Carrillo High School to Roseland University Prep

With these and other grass-roots community resident volunteer supporters we have combined efforts to in hopes of slowing and stopping the teen nicotine vaping epidemic across Santa Rosa and Sonoma County. These activities have been sustained throughout multiple wildfires, Covid-19 and other challenges facing those of our coalition living and/or working in Santa Rosa. Community members have spoken out about the vaping crisis to educate and advocate in a variety of forums including but not limited to:

- Numerous local media stories such as the Press Democrat and Sonoma West  
[https://issuu.com/sonomawest/docs/vape\\_layout?e=8240807/69387721](https://issuu.com/sonomawest/docs/vape_layout?e=8240807/69387721)  
<https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/benefield-maria-carrillo-high-school-student-at-forefront-of-fight-to-ban/>
- Santa Rosa City Schools parent education vaping prevention trainings 2019-2020.
- 2019 Santa Rosa Police Department Community Listening Sessions
- <https://www.dropbox.com/s/37d668p30w919s6/SRPD%20Community%20Listening%20Sessions%20Feedback.xlsx?dl=0>
- 2019-2022 Spanish language outreach to ELAC groups and Community Action Partnership Sonoma County Padres Unidos vaping prevention education sessions at Roseland Elementary and Roseland University Prep.
- Santa Rosa Forward Community Visioning Sessions 2021

<https://www.santarosaforward.com/CD-Visioning>

- Santa Rosa Goal Setting 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023
- Health Action and Santa Rosa Health Action presentations 2021-2022
- 2022 A Portrait of Sonoma County 2021 Update Community Forum
- Sonoma County Juneteeth Festival 2022
- South Park Day & Night Festival 2022, 2023
- Los Cien 10<sup>th</sup> Annual State of the LatinX Community Address 2023
- Outreach to Santa Rosa City Staff (including SRPD and Code Enforcement) and City Council 2019-present.

Santa Rosa youth, parents, teachers, school administrators, clinicians, community health workers/promotoras, health educators and advocates have called for more urgent action to curb the inappropriate and central role the tobacco industry has played in raising teen nicotine initiation rates in Santa Rosa. Our appeals are stringently based upon epidemiological data informing tried and tested policy solutions that are evidence-based and have for some time been becoming the norm across the Bay Area, North Bay and the much of California. While the tobacco industry uses corporate propaganda, pandering and misinformation to fight regulation, our broad public health alliance has been presenting comprehensive surveillance and data founded recommendations. There is strong consensus that a key step in curbing the vaping epidemic is for City Council to adopt a Tobacco Retail License Ordinance (TRL). The fact that a majority of Sonoma County voters voted in favor of far-reaching tobacco control measures in November 2022 provides further examples of community will behind retail regulation. Why? Some of the reasons include:

- Over-all high proliferation of tobacco retailing and neighborhood-clustering of tobacco retailing especially in our most vulnerable Santa Rosa neighborhoods compared to more affluent relatively tobacco-retailer-free neighborhoods.
- Trends of higher increase in smoke/vape shops within Santa Rosa city limits.
- Very high rates of sales of tobacco products to underage purchasers as documented via waves County Health Department Young Adult Tobacco Purchase Surveys in Santa Rosa.
- Santa Rosa's falling behind health equity advances of Petaluma, Sebastopol and Windsor that have banned e-cigarette devices and products (and stuck with "F" grades related to an absence of retail regulation according to the American Lung Association)
- Calls for support by Santa Rosa parents to County Health and TFSCCC to address sales to teens at downtown smoke/vape shops demonstrated by parents producing receipts and proof of purchase.
- School staff, students and student support groups such as Padres Unidos reporting the chronic use of e-cigarettes on local Middle and High School.
- Local pediatricians citing alarming rates of treating teen nicotine use.
- Food, alcohol, and cannabis sales are highly regulated in Santa Rosa. It makes sense that very addictive, toxic and deadly commercial nicotine products should also be strictly regulated.

Retailers are valued members of our community. We are neighbors, our children go to school together. We shop in many of their stores. We celebrate local markets, convenience and “mom and pop” stores in our community. We especially want to highlight merchants in Santa Rosa who thrive without selling commercial tobacco as well as the majority of Latino and Asian markets who do not advertise, display or otherwise rely prominently on tobacco sales. We celebrate stores like CVS who have stopped all tobacco retail and Rite Aid which has reduced inventory. A healthy and safer and more equitable Santa Rosa requires our active accountability. We are all collectively responsible for solving the #1 cause of preventable disease and death and a major cause of health disparities in Santa Rosa which is commercial tobacco. Health equity is about allowing the conversation to be about prosperity broadly not just for one small segment of our community- those who sell and use commercial tobacco. Health equity for our whole community, our children’s health and futures and residents of all ages. Those of us who are asking for a TRL to keep our youth safe promote a diverse mosaic of the Santa Rosa community. We care deeply and have demonstrated persistent and vocal concern for the health and wellbeing of all Santa Rosans, merchants, customers and everyone in between.

For these reasons outlined above and many more we know you have heard and will be hearing from the community, we request that City Council adopt a comprehensive Tobacco Retail License ordinance like Petaluma, Sebastopol and Windsor that especially bans e-cigarette products.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Damron". The signature is stylized with a large, looped 'G' and a cursive 'D'.

Greg Damron  
Parent of a Santa Rosa Junior College Student  
Santa Rosa neighborhood activist  
Blue Zones Project Public Policy Advocate

**From:** [Karissa Moreno](#)  
**To:** [City Council Public Comments](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 11/14/23 Item 4.2 Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, November 13, 2023 1:27:10 PM  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-h420fihk.png](#)  
[Outlook-zw0hpspd.png](#)  
[Outlook-gszexq4x.png](#)  
[TRL Letter to City of Santa Rosa.pdf](#)

---

Dear City Council,



Please find the attached letter in support of the proposed Santa Rosa Tobacco Retail License.

I appreciate all you do to support the health and well-being of our community!

Thank you,  
Karissa



**Karissa Moreno, MA (she/her/ella)**  
Executive Director | Center for Well-Being  
Direct: 707.338.6219 | Main: 707.575.6043  
[norcalwellbeing.org](http://norcalwellbeing.org)

Click icons to follow us!  



November 13, 2023

**Re: Item 4.2, November 14, 2023, Santa Rosa City Council Meeting Study Session**

Dear Santa Rosa City Council,

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 3644  
Santa Rosa, CA, 95402

Phone 707-575-6043  
Fax: 707-575-1060

[www.norcalwellbeing.org](http://www.norcalwellbeing.org)

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**Executive Director**

Karissa Moreno, MA

Tax ID: 93-1144835

As the Executive Director of the Northern California Center for Well Being, a local non-profit dedicated to the elimination of chronic disease in our region, I am writing in support of a proposed Santa Rosa Tobacco Retail License (TRL). Because our organization is actively involved in smoking prevention and cessation, and because we are committed to supporting the health and well-being of our entire community, I am encouraging the Council to support this city-wide TRL.

Santa Rosa is surrounded by jurisdictions that have TRLs such as Petaluma, Sebastopol, Town of Windsor, City of Sonoma, and the County; however, without a TRL in our city, more tobacco retailers and vape shops have opened to meet the demand. We know that youth vaping is an epidemic – and the use of nicotine by our youth puts them at risk for increased blood pressure, heart disease, lung disease and increases anxiety, depression and other mental health issues. The Council has an opportunity to make the health and well-being of our youth a priority by passing a city-wide TRL.

We know that tobacco kills. We also know that Big Tobacco targets youth, communities of color, and the LGBTQIA+ community with the predatory marketing of flavored tobacco products and vape products. It is imperative that we prioritize the health and well-being of historically marginalized communities and our youth.

Please restrict the sale of flavored nicotine and tobacco products in Santa Rosa by supporting the Santa Rosa Tobacco Retail License.

Thank you,

Karissa Moreno  
Executive Director

Dear Mayor Rogers and esteemed City Council Members,

As a concerned Santa Rosa resident, parent to students in Santa Rosa City Schools and community advocate I would like to request that the Santa Rosa City Council adopt a Tobacco-Retail License Ordinance (TRL). Most Sonoma County jurisdictions have TRLs, with the adoption of a TRL for Unincorporated areas of the County movement is well on its way. Concerned residents have prioritized health equity by taking action to address the number one cause of preventable disease and death- commercial tobacco use. We need a TRL to help address a major cause of health disparity in our city.

The 2021 Portrait of Sonoma highlighted significant health disparities between Santa Rosa's East Bennett Valley area and Roseland, two neighborhoods separated by only a short distance geographically. The Portrait's HDI = HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX highlights a nine-year gap in life expectancy and more than \$48,000 difference in earnings between the more affluent Bennett Valley and Roseland.

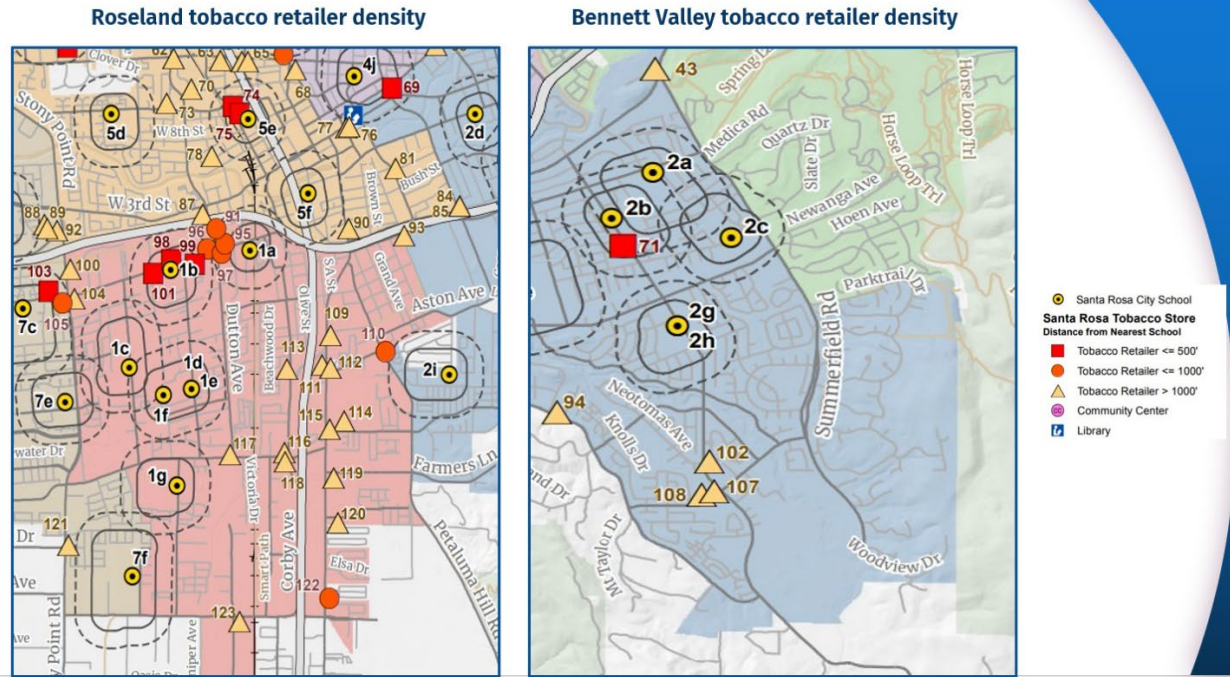
A major recommendation published in the Portrait was to "Redouble Antismoking Efforts." This is because commercial tobacco use being a major cause of heart and lung disease and several other health destroying and life-shortening issues.

In Santa Rosa, tobacco retailing density tells an interesting story of disparity as well. There are more than twice as many tobacco retailers in the Roseland area than in East Bennett Valley. A close examination of neighborhood maps and retailer locations provided by the Sonoma County Department of Health Services shows a striking trend across Santa Rosa. There are higher proliferations of tobacco-retailing near neighborhoods of lower-socio-economically advantaged residents. Commercial tobacco retail clusters are evident across Santa Rosa districts such as at Middle Rincon Rd. and Hwy 12, West Steele Lane and Guerneville Rd, Stony Point Rd and Hwy 12, Steele Lane and Mendocino Avenue.

This is no accident. The multi-billion dollar tobacco industry specifically targets more vulnerable communities with commercial tobacco. In this way, Big tobacco essentially rigs our vulnerability for its profits. Big Tobacco spends millions and millions of dollars fighting local regulation efforts. They manipulate business owners with industry lobbyist tactics. They push misinformation. This is because Big Tobacco itself wants to regulate our community vulnerabilities in its favor. The goal is to recruit teenage targets to initiate them. Then industry wants to keep them as life-long nicotine users.

Without a Tobacco Retail License, our community's ability to take back our neighborhoods from Big Tobacco is very limited. Federal and State enforcement of existing tobacco laws is minimal. TRLs are fee-based and provide a self-supporting tool to reign in sales to our children and incentive more responsible retailing. We need a strong TRL, like Petaluma, Sebastopol and Windsor that ban e-cigarette products and devices, sets boundaries to schools, and restricts retailer density. This will allow our community to better address the number one cause of preventable disease and death in our neighborhoods. A TRL will be a critical step in our goal for health equity for all Santa Rosa residents.

<!--[if vml]-->



<!--[endif]-->

Additionally, students feel that vapes and e-cigs are less invasive, but is it?

Thank you so much for the considerations.

**From:** [Pam Granger](#)  
**To:** [CityCouncilListPublic](#); [City Clerk](#); [CMOffice](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Study session Item 4.2 Tobacco Retail License  
**Date:** Monday, November 13, 2023 3:16:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)

---



**Tobacco-Free  
Sonoma County  
COMMUNITY COALITION**

## **We need your help Urgently!**

### **What?**

**The Tobacco-Free Sonoma County Community Coalition wants to impress upon the Santa Rosa City Council that it is crucial for the city to pass a tobacco retail license regulating the sale of all tobacco/vape products matching those strong protective polities in Sebastopol, Windsor, Petaluma and the County.**

### **Why?**

*There is no one way to keep kids from starting to use nicotine products and support those wanting to quit, but here are just some quick reasons why joining your neighbors towards nicotine-free kids is vital.*

✓ Kids are still getting addicted to nicotine, mostly from vaping and yet not all the cities in Sonoma County have the same laws that help protect them from starting. *Once again, zip code matters.*

Sebastopol, Windsor, Petaluma and Sonoma County Unincorporated said, “we worked hard to reduce the number of kids who smoke in our communities. It took us a few years, but we realize now that we don’t need or want one more addictive product - a cool electronic one at that - sold in our stores to lure our kids into being Big Tobacco’s customers for life.” *So now they don’t (it’s a law). A patchwork of laws across the county doesn’t work - let’s support each other with our collective public health goals!*

✓ **Santa Rosa is not implementing SB 793**

Aren’t flavored tobacco products banned from sale in California stores? - Yes, and this law is an unfunded mandate. In conversation with Sonoma County’s tobacco prevention program (Impact Sonoma), City staff said they don’t have the personnel or expertise to do more than respond to citizen complaints. Impact Sonoma and community members report illegal inventory exists and sales

are being made. Relying on the public to report illegal sales is not a way to enforce any law, especially one as important as this. It's just plain unacceptable. The fee charged for a *tobacco retail license (TRL)* would provide the funds for enforcement and a *MOU (agreement)* with the Impact Sonoma team to implement the law is available.

### ✓ **Big Tobacco is creating new products to bypass the law**

Local jurisdictions are finding several flaws with SB 793 (the flavored tobacco ban) which California voters upheld in 2022 by 63%. SB 793 has exemptions that other Sonoma County cities are closing and Big Tobacco is creating new products to bypass the law. As an example, non-menthol menthol products "just for California" have flooded the market with claims that their synthetic menthol isn't covered. *The proposed Santa Rosa TRL policy (law) has better definitions (wording which include these lab-made menthol and other new products) to thwart blatant efforts by Big Tobacco to circumvent our intent of reducing youth starting to use nicotine products and supporting those who want to quit.*

### ✓ **Why ban all electronic smoking devices (vapes)?**

1. What will be the impact on retailers if the sale of all vapes are banned? Tobacco products are only a small part of the items that most retailers who sell tobacco products carry. Most of the vape inventory should have been gone since last December when California voters decided to ban the sale of flavored devices. Retailers should have modified what they offer for sale 10 months ago. With regular news articles about the harmful effects of nicotine on a young person's developing brain, a community wanting to move away from vapes altogether should not come as a surprise to store owners. The fact that selling tobacco makes them some money doesn't give them a pass to sell harmful, potentially life-threatening products in our city.
2. Retailers find that complying with national, state and local laws is easier when they don't have to guess which of the few vape products left are in compliance with the law.
3. "Oh, goody - another way for my child to get hooked on nicotine," said no parent ever. Unflavored e-cigarettes may not have the same lure for youth, but the nicotine in them is just as harmful and we don't want them either. Studies show youth mental health and nicotine are colliding crises. Nicotine addiction, mood disorders, and permanent lowering of impulse control are critical problems. Nicotine also changes the way synapses are formed, which can harm the parts of the brain that control attention and learning.
4. We would never extoll the virtues of cigarettes - children and animals have gotten sick from eating them - but e-liquids, especially those containing even small amounts of nicotine, can be dangerous to curious children if they touch or drink them, including causing seizures, coma, respiratory arrest and death.

### ✓ **Additionally, combustible and electronic cigarettes are bad for the environment**

- Cigarette butts are the #1 littered item in the world. Besides being an eyesore, the cellulose filters take decades to break down, wildlife eat them and get sick or die, and the residual nicotine is a poison.
- Discarded electronic cigarettes (vapes) are even worse - add plastic debris



and lithium batteries to the nicotine leaching out. They are listed as California hazardous waste and should be treated and disposed of as such. School staff confiscate them, but there is no easy way to dispose of them.

✓ **A TRL can help communities improve health equity.**

- One of the most promising potential uses of TRL is to reduce inequities in how tobacco products are marketed and sold in underserved communities.
- Research has found that the prices of tobacco products tend to be lower in neighborhoods of low socioeconomic status and African American neighborhoods.
- Evidence shows that these same communities have higher rates of tobacco use and addiction, worse health outcomes, and increased health inequities.
- Because the health problems associated with tobacco use fall disproportionately on underserved communities, policy interventions that affect consumption, price, or marketing also have a greater impact on these populations and have the potential to address these inequities.
- Youth are particularly price sensitive. With less income, setting a minimum price, minimum pack size and restricting coupons and discounts is a proven strategy to reduce youth tobacco use and encourage quitting.

**There are more reasons, but this is a running start. Thanks for your support of our kids!**

--

**Pam Granger, chair  
Tobacco-Free Sonoma**



**From:** [Bob Curry](#)  
**To:** [CityCouncilListPublic](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Santa Rosa City Council Proposed TRL  
**Date:** Monday, November 13, 2023 3:52:46 PM

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*November 13, 2023*

*Dear Santa Rosa Council Members,*

*I am writing to you as a resident of Sonoma County, as an advocate and member of the Tobacco-Free Sonoma County Community Coalition, and as a recently retired Marin County Tobacco Control Program Director with 30 years of experience in tobacco control.*

*It is my understanding that Santa Rosa is currently reviewing and discussing a proposed TRL (Tobacco Retailer Licensing Ordinance). This ordinance is long overdue and hopefully will move quickly to a public meeting and be adopted with all the components that are currently in the Petaluma, Sebastopol, and Windsor TRLs. While working in Marin County we adopted complete protections for our youth in every jurisdiction that has a tobacco retailer.*

*Unfortunately, I was very immersed in my work in Marin and didn't realize that the Santa Rosa Council had not adopted a TRL – this is not only disappointing but concerning that you haven't addressed this youth protection policy. I encourage you to move swiftly to provide this protection for your community. Our youth deserve this safeguard against the Tobacco Industry who has clearly no concern for whom they addict. Last year the residents of California sent a message to the Tobacco Industry with the passage of Prop 31 (Flavor Ban) and immediately the Industry "thumbed its nose" at all of us and flooded the market with new products that would skirt the law and continue with their mission to addict new generations to tobacco. Their actions alone should propel this policy to quick adoption.*

*Despite long-standing state laws prohibiting tobacco sales to minors, youth continue to obtain cigarettes, vape products and other tobacco products at alarming rates. Tobacco Prevention Coalitions recommend that cities adopt and enforce strong tobacco retailer licensing ordinances in order to reduce the illegal sales rate of tobacco to minors and to encourage compliance with all local, state and federal tobacco laws but more importantly to work toward ending the epidemic of tobacco use by all.*

*The DRAFT policy before you for review is like many of the ordinances that have been adopted by jurisdictions in Sonoma and Marin. It is long past time for Santa Rosa to join their local partners in this proven youth protection. Please act quickly before more youth are addicted to tobacco.*

*Sincerely*

*Bob Curry*

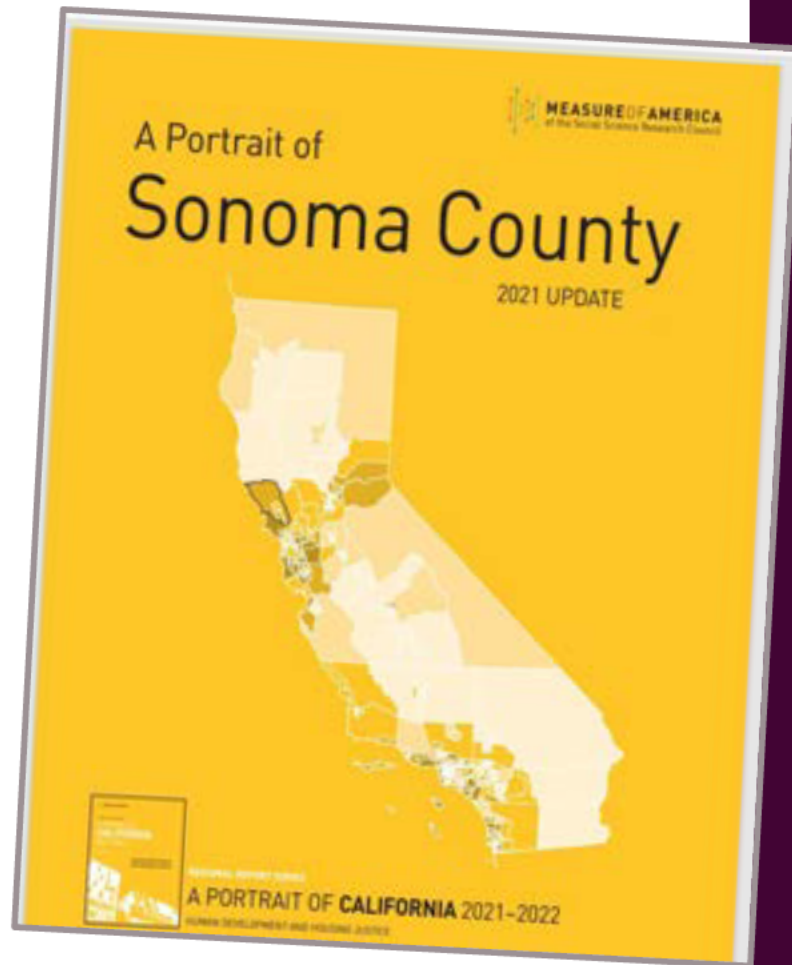
*30-year tobacco control advocate in Sonoma and Marin Counties*

# Health Justice

Fighting Tobacco & Nicotine  
Addiction in Santa Rosa

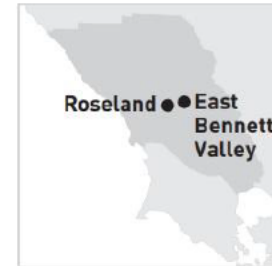
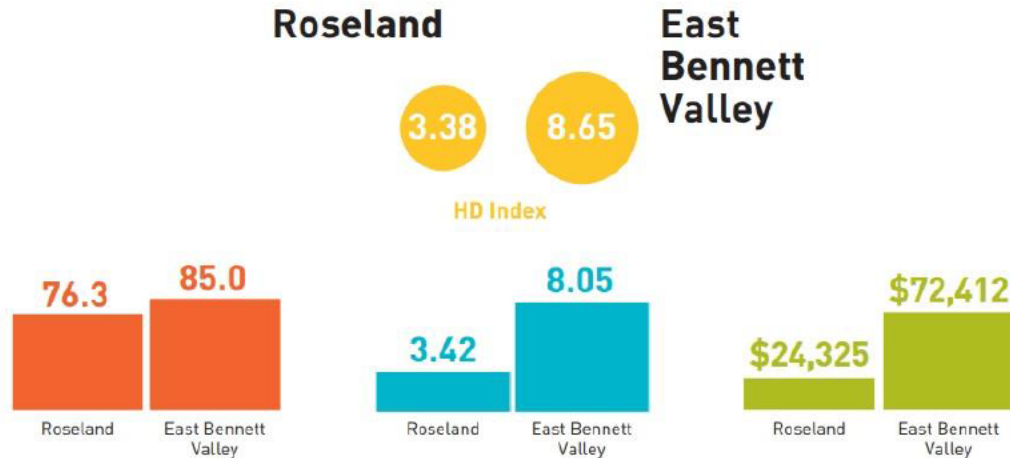
Santa Rosa Health Action Chapter  
March 2, 2022

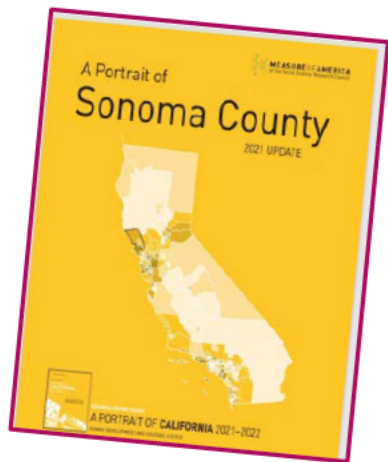
# Health Disparities Persist



## VARIATION BY NEIGHBORHOOD

As is the case across the United States and California, HDI scores vary dramatically by geography in Sonoma County—in Roseland, the HDI is 3.38, whereas in East Bennett Valley, it is 8.65. This gap is far larger than the gaps that separate demographic groups in the aggregate. The difference in the HDI between these neighborhoods translates to nearly a nine-year gap in life expectancy, a more than \$48,000 difference in earnings, and a 47.9-percentage-point gap in bachelor's degree attainment.



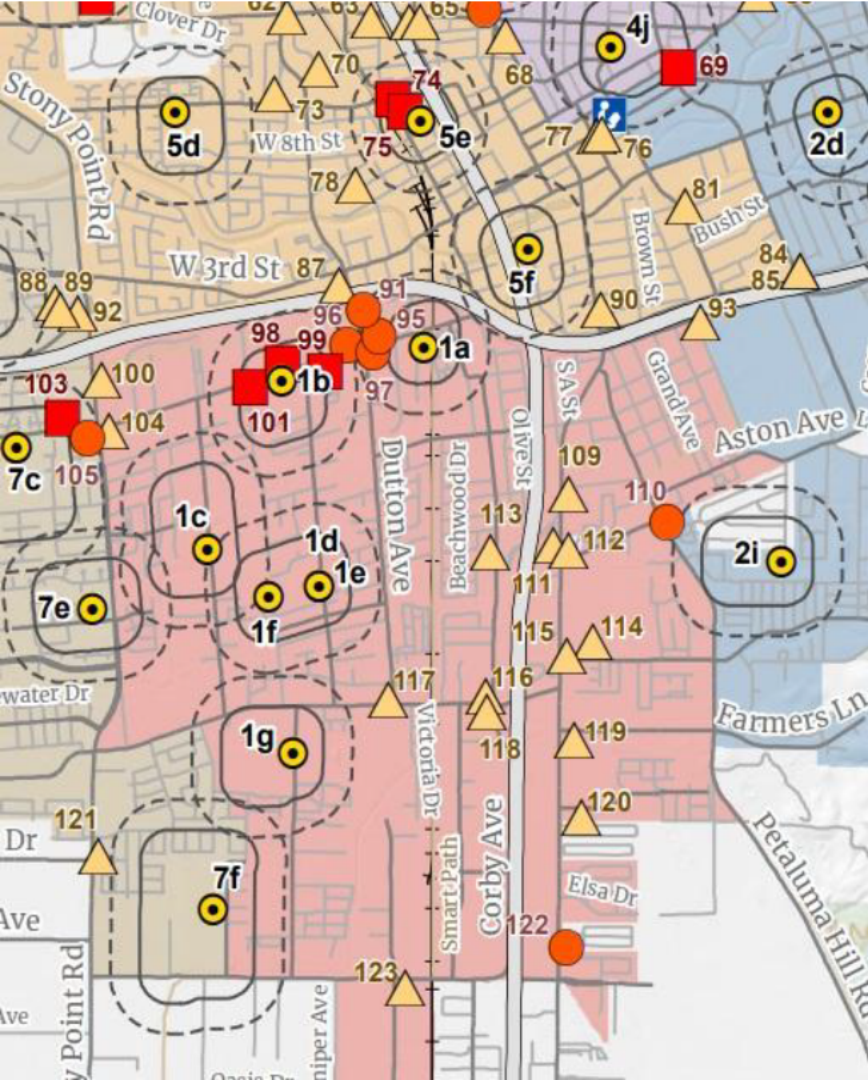


## “Redouble Anti-smoking Efforts”



AREA	RECOMMENDATION	2014 REPORT DATA	MOST RECENT DATA
A Long and Healthy Life	Redouble Antismoking Efforts	14.3% of adults smoke	13% of adults smoke
	Increase Access to Health Insurance	15% of residents don't have insurance	6% of residents don't have insurance

***Smoking is the #1 cause of preventable disease and death***



# Roseland

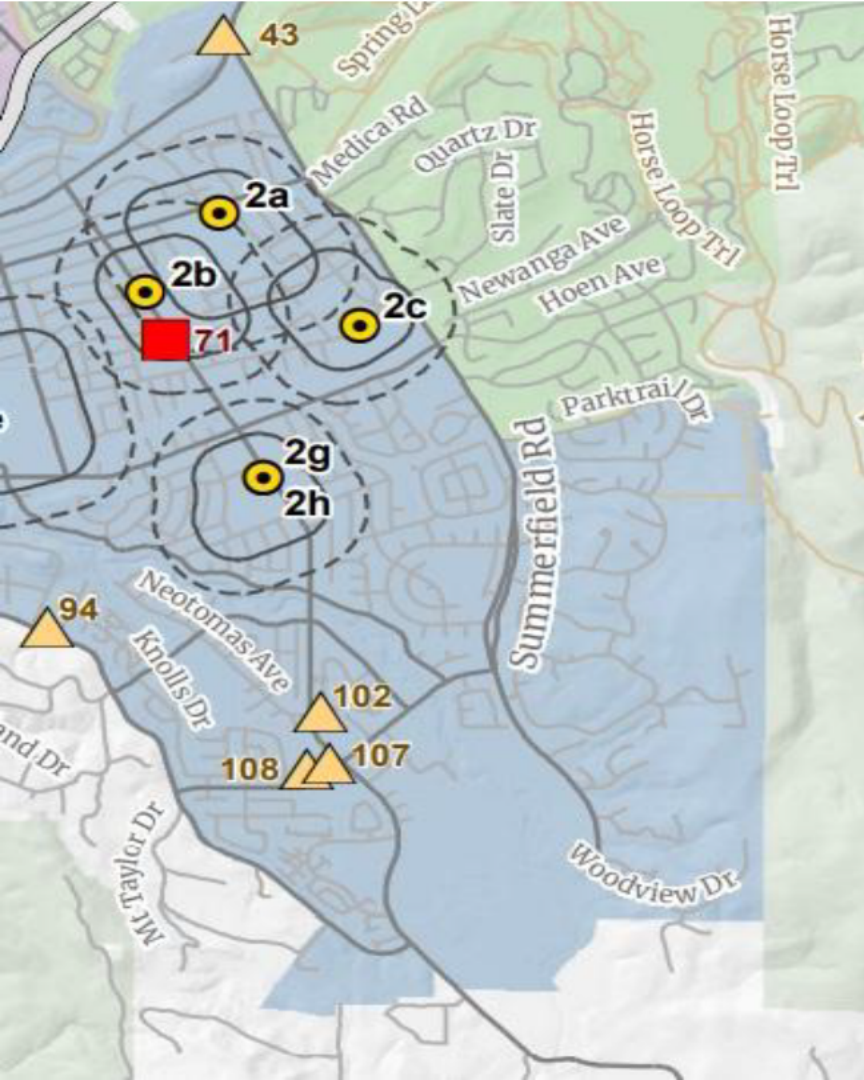
● Santa Rosa City School

**Santa Rosa Tobacco Store**

**Distance from Nearest School**

- Tobacco Retailer  $\leq 500'$
- Tobacco Retailer  $\leq 1000'$
- ▲ Tobacco Retailer  $> 1000'$
- Community Center
- Library





## East Bennett Valley

● Santa Rosa City School

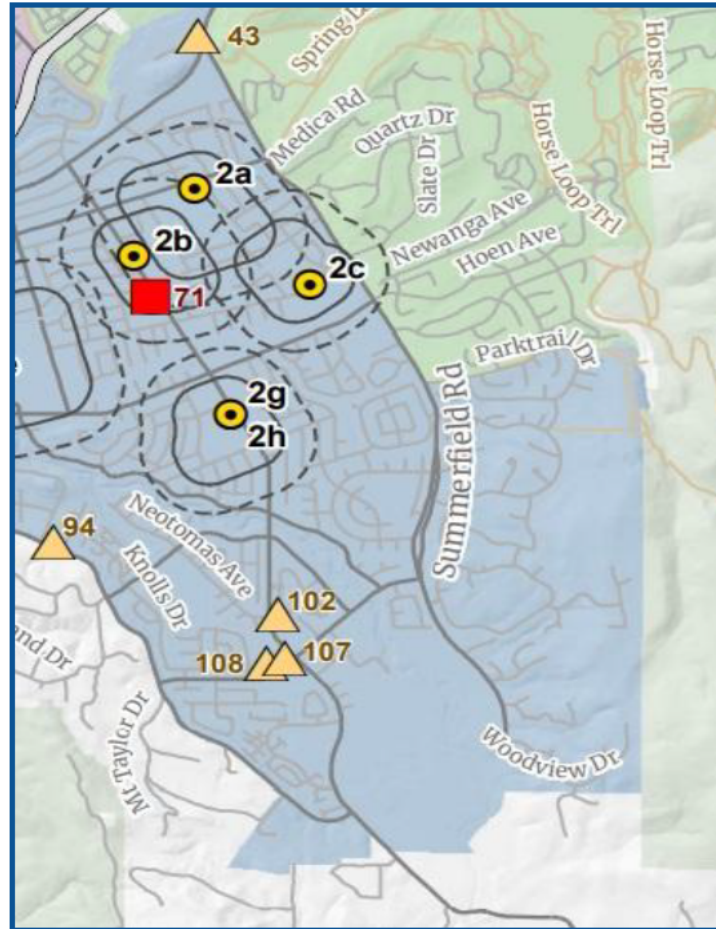
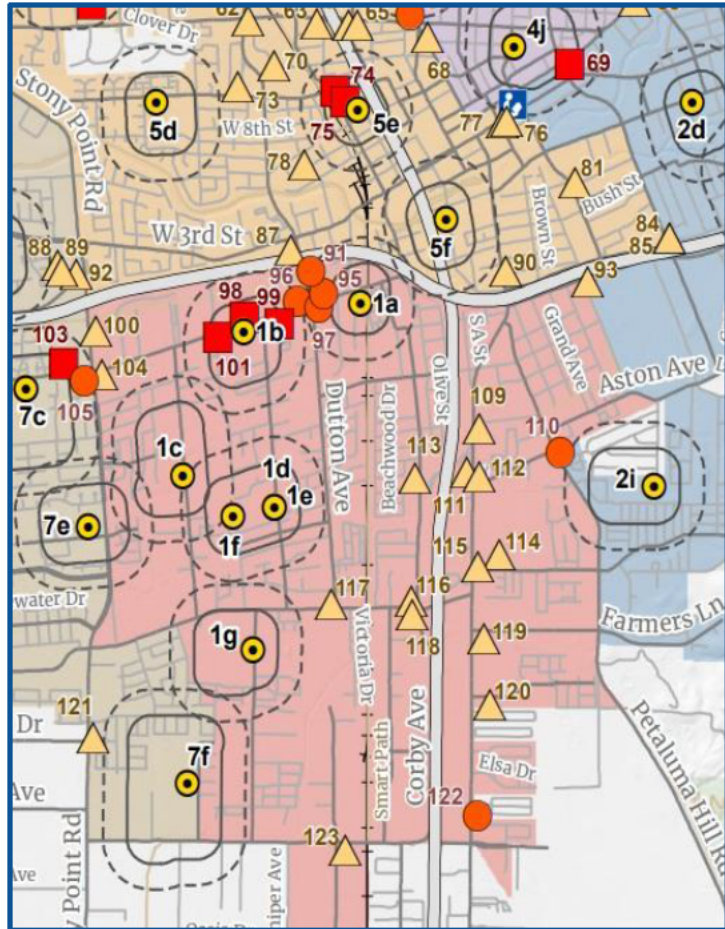
### Santa Rosa Tobacco Store

Distance from Nearest School

- Tobacco Retailer  $\leq 500'$
- Tobacco Retailer  $\leq 1000'$
- ▲ Tobacco Retailer  $> 1000'$
- CC Community Center
- Library



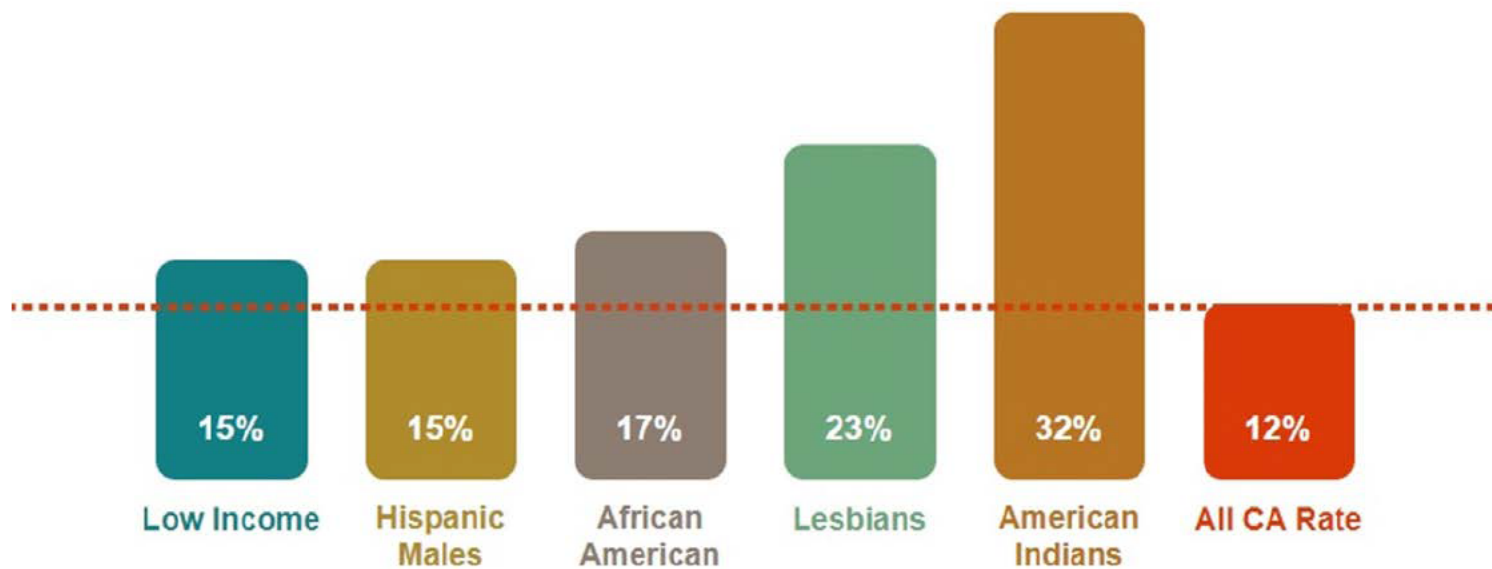
# Notice a difference of retailer density?



- Santa Rosa City School
- Santa Rosa Tobacco Store**  
Distance from Nearest School
- Tobacco Retailer ≤ 500'
- Tobacco Retailer ≤ 1000'
- ▲ Tobacco Retailer > 1000'
- ⊕ Community Center
- ℹ Library

# Tobacco's Targeted Populations

Big Tobacco has deliberately and aggressively advertised to minority populations, with dramatic results.



Smoking rates among different population groups.

# WE ARE HERE TO HELP

To our valued local businesses:

Human Response Network's Tobacco Free Trinity program is providing this packet of resources to help you comply with California tobacco sales laws and provide resources to help your business thrive without tobacco sales should you choose to move in that direction.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Suggestion to help you succeed without tobacco
- Testimonies from successful rural retailers
- Information about business organizations who can provide free help
- Information about California's tobacco sales laws, including the new law that prohibits flavored tobacco sales

If you would like additional information, please feel free to reach out at (530) 623-2024 or email Karen Compton at [kcompton@hrntrinity.org](mailto:kcompton@hrntrinity.org)

Links to the included resources are also available on our website, [www.tobaccofreetrinity.org](http://www.tobaccofreetrinity.org).



**EMAIL ADDRESS:**

[tobaccofreetrinity@hrntrinity.org](mailto:tobaccofreetrinity@hrntrinity.org)

**PHONE NUMBER:**

530-623-2024

**WEBSITE:**

[www.tobaccofreetrinity.org](http://www.tobaccofreetrinity.org)

# TIPS TO SUCCEED WITHOUT TOBACCO

## TIPS TO SUCCEED WITHOUT TOBACCO SALES

### Changing sales tactics and business practices

- Incremental process - one thing at a time.

### Increase Online Presence:

- Create or update a website for your business.
- Try social media promotions on Facebook and Instagram
- Update your business on Google Maps and Search Engines

### Register with a delivery service such as DoorDash or Instacart.

### Sign up to be a vendor that accepts EBT and WIC.

### Consider offering: Money Orders, Video Rental Box, ATM



## HIGH MARGIN PRODUCTS: REPLACEMENT ITEMS THAT INCREASE SALES

- **Fresh prepared foods:** Deli sandwiches, flat breads, pizzas, soups, and salads
- **Coffee drinks:** Upgrade coffee stations and offer gourmet and specialty brews
- **Produce:** Fresh fruits and veggies
- **Basic Groceries:** Milk, eggs, and yogurt
- **Cultural cuisine and specialty products:** align with cultures in your area
- **Local Souvenirs:** T-shirts, mugs, decals, lanyards, toys, water bottles
- **Combo specials:** S'more kits; hotdog, bun, and condiment combo discounts
- **Refreshments:** Sparkling water, fruit drinks, health drinks, iced tea, etc.
- **Snacking:** Protein bars, protein snack boxes, holiday foods, specialty candy
- **Emergency and Camping Supplies:** Flashlights, lanterns, batteries, ice, coolers
- **Clothing, electronics, and accessories:** Hats, backpacks, cell phone accessories
- **Sundries:** Toilet paper, tissues, wipes, condoms, cleaning supplies



## TIPS FOR INVOLVING CUSTOMERS

**Cash Discounting:** Display signs, no card fees

### Social Media Contests for Giveaways:

- Share the post or take a photo and share to be entered in a contest for a prize

**Customer Loyalty:** Punch cards for a free item

## PARTNER WITH LOCAL VENDORS

- Local grocers for take & bake pizza
- Caterers for hot meals, deli sandwiches and desserts



**PATH** PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION  
FOR TRINITY HEALTH



**EMAIL ADDRESS:**

tobaccofreetrinity@hrntrinity.org

**PHONE NUMBER:**

530-623-2024

**WEBSITE:**

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# TESTIMONIALS FROM RURAL RETAILERS



## TRINITY RETAILER: SUCCESSFUL RURAL NEIGHBORHOOD STORE

Liam Gogan is a local retailer in Douglas City, Trinity County where the population is 868 persons. He and his wife Krista own and operate a small Mom and Pop store with one gas pump. They have been in business for 9,200 days (over 25 years); that was built on good-will and relationships.

"The number one thing that works for our store is that we are part of the community. Our customers are our neighbors, and we take care of our neighborhood. We are the people down the road that have food. We have a personal relationship with each of our customers with a non-judgmental respect for their privacy. We have our own security, and we look out for each other. If you walk to the store hungry, you will be fed and have a ride home. We are there through COVID and when it snows. You can always count on us being there."

Liam's advice for retailers: "Your customers are your neighbors. Have a respectful relationship and look out for them. Offer set hours and be there. Be the one your neighbors can count on."



## MODOC RETAILER: SUCCESSFUL WITHOUT TOBACCO

Bill Hall is a rural retailer in Alturas, a small city of 2,715 people in Modoc County. Modoc is a small, rural county with only 8,500 residents in the Shasta Cascade region of Northern California. In Modoc County, cigarette sales are almost nonexistent with only two retailers selling tobacco products. The city of Alturas has had a flavored tobacco sales ban for two years.

Bill Hall has had a successful store in Modoc County for many years. He recently shared his views and tips for being successful without tobacco. "Our family has owned Four Corners Market since 1987 and have been successful without selling tobacco products since 1989. The market is 1100 square foot with only two checkers, yet sales have consistently increased, reaching their current sales of \$3.5 million each year."

"I know the owners of both Holiday Market and Junction City Store and coached girls basketball opposite the superintendent of Trinity Alps Unified School District so am familiar with the issues in Trinity County."

"My recommendations are to move your money from tobacco products. Put it into your produce and invest in the produce misters. Stock foods that are not heated and can be purchased with EBT including take and bake pizza and build your own salad bars. Provide prepared, ready-to-eat-meals such as pasta meals or ribs, and rotisserie chicken, a nationwide trend where sales have gone through the roof. Most of all don't be afraid of losing business. In the movie "Miracle On 34th Street," the department store sent the customer to a different store if they were out of an item or it was cheaper. In retail, it's really about making your customer loyal through positive interactions and a family atmosphere."



**PATH** PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION  
FOR TRINITY HEALTH



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# HELP FOR RETAILERS

## BUSINESS ASSISTANCE ORGANIZATIONS

Help to Shift Your Strategy for Successful Products and Profits

### Small Business Development Center Shasta/Siskiyou/Trinity SBDC

1512 S. Oregon St. 1305 Sacramento St.  
Yreka, CA 96097 Redding, CA 960011  
1(530) 842-1638 1(530) 222-8323

#### Register to become a client:

- <https://www.sbdsc.org/join/>
- Create a personal profile, business profile, and submit.
- A staff member will connect with you on your schedule.

#### Services Provided

- Free individual counseling & training
- Free one-on-one consulting
- Adaptive Planning (plan for crisis & winter season)
- Provide workshops for building websites with e-commerce for tourists

### Women's Business Center at JEDI

Shasta, Siskiyou, Trinity, Humboldt, Del Norte, Tehama, Modoc

1670 Market St. Ste.#112  
Redding, CA 96001  
1(888) 926-6670

#### Register to become a client:

- <https://www.wbcjedi.org/contact>
- Fill out the contact form and submit.
- A staff member will connect with you on your schedule.

## INFORMATION ABOUT BECOMING A WIC VENDOR

Contact Trinity County Public Health  
1(530) 623-1358 or [wic.hhs@trinitycounty.org](mailto:wic.hhs@trinitycounty.org)

## INFORMATION ABOUT BECOMING A CAL FRESH / SNAP / EBT VENDOR

USDA Food and Nutrition Services  
1(877) 823-4369 SNAP Retailer Service Ctr.  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply-to-accept>

## CALIFORNIA TOBACCO RETAILER RESOURCES

California Tobacco Control Program (CTCP)  
Help for retailers to comply with tobacco sales laws.  
Visit their website for more information.  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDI/C/CTCB/Pages/TobaccoRetailersResources.aspx>

## LOCAL SOUVENIR MERCHANDISING CONSULTANT

Up North Confectionery,  
Mercantile, & Eatery  
Contact Ryan Crockett at [crockettryan@gmail.com](mailto:crockettryan@gmail.com)  
for a list of local vendors.



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# TIPS TO COMPLY WITH TOBACCO LAWS

## CA LAW PROHIBITS TOBACCO SALES TO PEOPLE UNDER AGE 21

- The Stop Tobacco Access to Kids Enforcement (STAKE) Act, prohibits the sale and furnishing of tobacco products to persons under the age of 21 (Business and Professions Code Division 8.5).
- Retailers must check the ID of anyone who looks younger than 27 years of age. (21 CFR 1140.14(a)(2))



## TOBACCO RETAILERS MUST BE LICENSED IN CALIFORNIA

- To sell tobacco products in California, a retailer must obtain a California Cigarette and Tobacco Products Retailer License administered by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) and pay an annual fee of \$265. Get more information at [www.cdtfa.ca.gov](http://www.cdtfa.ca.gov).



## DISPLAY STAKE ACT AGE OF SALE WARNING SIGNS AT EACH REGISTER

- All tobacco retailers are required to post age-of-sale warning signs stating that selling tobacco products to anyone under 21 years of age is illegal and subject to penalties at each point of sale.

**The Sale of Tobacco Products to Persons Under 21 Years of Age Is Prohibited by Law and Subject to Penalties**

**To Report an Unlawful Tobacco Sale Call 1-800-5 ASK-4-ID**

**Valid Identification May Be Required**  
Business and Professions Code Section 22952 21 U.S.C 387(d)  
This sign must be readable by the consumer and must not be altered, covered or obliterated in whole or in part.

- Scan camera or QR code reader in your application.
- Hold your smartphone over QR code so that it's clearly visible within camera screen.
- Look for the notification banner in app to trigger code's action.

## SELF-SERVICE TOBACCO DISPLAYS ARE NOT PERMITTED

- Retailers cannot have self-service displays for most tobacco products (including electronic smoking devices, e-liquids, components, parts or accessories). A self-service display is any display that allows customers to access items without help from the retailer. (Some exceptions for tobacco only stores for some products.)



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# FAQ'S ABOUT FLAVORED TOBACCO

## CA LAW PROHIBITS THE SALE OF MOST FLAVORED TOBACCO PRODUCTS

- California state law prohibits the sale of most flavored tobacco products, including flavored e-cigarettes and menthol cigarettes, as well as tobacco product flavor enhancers in retail locations, including stores and vending machines, in California. (Health and Safety Code Section 104559.5)
- Retailers, their agents or their employees will be found guilty of an infraction and fined \$250 for violation of this law.
- The penalties apply to retailers, their agents or their employees who sell, offer for sale, or possess with intent to sell or offer for sale most flavored tobacco products, including e-cigarettes that deliver nicotine or other vaporized liquids and menthol cigarettes, as well as tobacco product flavor enhancers.

## FLAVORED TOBACCO PRODUCTS THAT CANNOT BE SOLD IN CALIFORNIA

- Flavored electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) or vapes that deliver another vaporized liquid, e-juice, pods, or cartridges
- Flavored e-liquids, even if they contain tobacco-free nicotine or do not contain any nicotine
- Vape pens with flavored cannabidiol (CBD), aromatherapy, or essential oils
- Menthol cigarettes
- Flavored non-premium cigars, little cigars, and cigarillos
- Flavored smokeless tobacco
- Flavored blunt wraps and flavored hemp wraps
- Flavored loose-leaf, roll-your-own tobacco
- Flavor enhancers, such as e-liquid flavor enhancers or flavored cigarette papers



## MORE INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ONLINE

Visit the California Tobacco Control Branch webpage:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDCPHP/DCDIC/CTCB/Pages/TobaccoRetailersResources.aspx>.



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**From:** [madawaska2@aol.com](mailto:madawaska2@aol.com)  
**To:** [\\_CityCouncilistPublic](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Tobacco Prevention Policies for Santa Rosa  
**Date:** Monday, May 20, 2024 11:16:46 AM

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Dear Councilmember,

My name is Bob Gordon, a member of Impact Sonoma, Tobacco Free Sonoma County Community Coalition

=====

I commend you for considering tobacco prevention policies that have been passed in many other communities. Specifically, I'd like to call your attention to the tobacco-free pharmacy provision as part of a tobacco retail license. Santa Rosa can join 60 other jurisdictions in California that have already ended the sale of every tobacco product in every pharmacy.

With such a policy, no Santa Rosa pharmacy or store with a pharmacy inside would ever receive a license to sell any tobacco product: Costco, Creekside, CVS, Dollar Drug, Rite Aid, Safeway or Walgreens.

Among the 60 jurisdictions in California, 5 City Councils and the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors have already passed a provision as part of their Tobacco Retail License that ends the sale of all tobacco and electronic smoking devices that incorporate nicotine. Those 5 City Councils are *Cloverdale, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Sebastopol, Windsor*, and as mentioned, *Unincorporated Sonoma County* passed by the Board of Supervisors.

Council Members do have the power to change what a pharmacy is for a whole new generation of young people. A pharmacy is a place to get better, not to get cancer (heart or lung disease).

We hope you'll agree, that in Santa Rosa, Cigarettes & Pharmacies Don't Mix.

Sincerely,

-Bob Gordon

<https://cigarettesandpharmaciesdontmix.org/>

Member, Impact Sonoma, Tobacco Free Sonoma County Community Coalition

**From:** [Jen Grand-Lejano](#)  
**To:** [\\_CityCouncilListPublic](#); [Alvarez, Eddie](#); [Stapp, Mark](#); [MacDonald, Dianna](#); [Fleming, Victoria](#); [Rogers, Chris](#); [Okrepkie, Jeff](#); [Rogers, Natalie](#)  
**Cc:** [Tobacco Free](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Support for Tobacco Retail ordinance at 5/21 City Council  
**Date:** Monday, May 20, 2024 12:29:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [ACSCAN\\_RGB\\_sm\\_.png](#)  
[Santa Rosa\\_TRL flavors letter of support May 2024.pdf](#)

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Dear Mayor Rogers and Members of the Santa Rosa City Council:

Thank you for considering policies to protect the Santa Rosa community from deadly tobacco. So many of our friends and family have been negatively impacted by insidious marketing of tobacco products to our most vulnerable populations and that's why **we urge you to adopt the proposed Tobacco Retail Licensing ordinance as written tomorrow at City Council**. Please see attached with more information supporting our ask.

Sincerely,



**Jen Grand-Lejano**  
Senior Government Relations Director, Northern  
California & Grant Program  
m: 925.639.9130  
[fightcancer.org](http://fightcancer.org) | 1.800.227.2345

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May 15, 2024



Honorable Natalie Rogers  
Vice Mayor Stapp  
Members of the Santa Rosa City Council  
100 Santa Rosa Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Dear Mayor Rogers and Members of the Santa Rosa City Council:

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network's (ACS CAN) mission is to advocate for evidence-based public policies to reduce the cancer burden for everyone, and we are committed to continuing that mission in Santa Rosa. We are deeply concerned about the availability of flavored and low-priced tobacco products marketed to youth, which is contributing to the growing epidemic that is plaguing our communities. Thank you for considering a policy to protect the health of our youth. We urge you to adopt the ordinance as drafted. ACS CAN supports a comprehensive tobacco retailer licensing (TRL) policy to:

- end the sale of menthol cigarettes and *all other flavored tobacco products*, including flavored shisha tobacco, all flavored cigars and flavored loose-leaf tobacco at *all retailers*;
- end the sale of all tobacco products at pharmacies;
- end online or delivery sales of tobacco products into Santa Rosa;
- raise the minimum price and pack size for tobacco products and prohibit tobacco discounts;
- cap the number of tobacco retailers and establish distance requirements between tobacco retailers and youth-sensitive areas; and
- codify at least 1 annual compliance check for each tobacco retailer

These provisions go far to protect residents from the predatory marketing of the tobacco industry, especially to protect against youth access to tobacco in Santa Rosa, which is a concern.

We urge you to adopt this ordinance which includes fees that are sufficient for administration, sustained equitable enforcement and meaningful penalties. It is critical that this ordinance end the sale of ALL flavored tobacco products at all retailers with no exemptions. Evidence shows that four out of five youth who use tobacco started with a flavored product. However, youth who live in a city where the sale of all flavored tobacco products is prohibited have a significantly reduced chance of ever trying tobacco products, and Santa Rosa youth deserve no less.

We also support ending the sale of all tobacco products in pharmacies as part of the comprehensive TRL. Pharmacies promote health and should not also sell products that contribute to a lifetime of addiction and disease. Tobacco-free pharmacies also reduce youth exposure to tobacco marketing in the community and contribute to a healthier retail environment and positive social norm change.

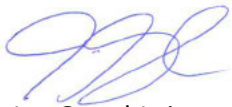
Tobacco retailer proximity to other tobacco retailers as well as youth-sensitive areas can have significant impact on access to tobacco products. It is no mystery that stores selling tobacco tend to cluster in limited-income neighborhoods and in communities of color, making unhealthy products readily available for their residents. Such stores are often within walking distance of schools, increasing the likelihood that young people are exposed to tobacco advertising on windows and products at the point of sale.

Additionally, the tobacco industry targets youth with low-priced and small-pack tobacco products that are easily purchased with pocket change and consumed quickly to avoid the attention of parents. Increasing the price and pack size of tobacco products reduces youth accessibility and mirrors best practice of other jurisdictions in Santa Rosa and surrounding Bay Area communities.

Best practice now includes language to ensure all tobacco retail sales in Santa Rosa are happening at brick-and-mortar stores. This protects against retailers circumventing the law by offering otherwise illegal products for sale online that customers can pick up in store. It also ensures all tobacco retailers are held to the same business standards and the policy has the intended effect to reduce availability of tobacco in the community.

The City Council needs to make the health of Santa Rosa youth a priority and join our neighbors in the more than 145 communities throughout California who have adopted policies to end the sale of flavored tobacco products. We urge you to adopt the comprehensive tobacco retailer licensing ordinance as drafted that ends the sale of all flavored tobacco products at all locations, establishes tobacco-free pharmacies, raises the minimum price and pack size of tobacco products, ends online/delivery sales of tobacco into the community, and addresses retailer density and proximity to youth-sensitive areas.

Sincerely,



Jen Grand-Lejano  
Senior Government Relations Director, Northern California  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

**From:** [Elissa Urlik](#)  
**To:** [\\_CityCouncilListPublic](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 16.3 Tobacco Retail License Support  
**Date:** Monday, May 20, 2024 3:40:58 PM

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My name is Elissa Urlik and I am a resident of district 2. I support the tobacco retail license. Thanks, Elissa

--

Elissa Urlik  
Law Office of Elissa Urlik

**Our office will continue to be working remotely. We will be checking our emails and phone messages regularly and will be available for phone conferences. Thank you for your understanding.**

**OFFICE HOURS:**

**MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

**FRIDAY: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

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**Law Office of Elissa Urlik, Inc.**

**The following dates: MARCH 10, 2024 THROUGH APRIL 17, 2024, MAY 27, 2024, JULY 22, 2024 THROUGH JULY 26, 2024, SEPTEMBER 27, 2024 THROUGH OCTOBER 7, 2024, OCTOBER 11, 2024, NOVEMBER 22, 2024 THROUGH AND INCLUDING DECEMBER 2, 2024, DECEMBER 23, 2024 THROUGH AND INCLUDING DECEMBER 27, 2024, JANUARY 1, 2025 THROUGH AND INCLUDING JANUARY 4, 2025 AND ALL FEDERAL AND STATE HOLIDAYS.**

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**From:** [Mary Lou Schmidt](#)  
**To:** [CityCouncilListPublic](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Action on the Tobacco Retail License Ordinance  
**Date:** Monday, May 20, 2024 4:04:23 PM

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**Gravenstein Health Action Coalition is recommending that a comprehensive TRL policy for the City of Santa Rosa be approved.** Gravenstein Health Action Coalition is a non-profit organization with a mission to improve the equity, health, safety and well-being for our Sonoma County communities. It is clear from the work we have done, in partnership with the City of Sebastopol and Tobacco Free Sonoma County Coalition since 2020, that vaping is not only a nationwide epidemic but also prevalent in our local schools. A recent questionnaire at one of our local schools showed a 15% rate of students vaping within 30 days of the questionnaire. The Centers for Disease Control cite the national Youth Truth Survey from 2023 showing that 10% of middle and high school students reported the use of e-cigarette products.

There are both long and short-term health effects of these nicotine delivery systems, such as, anxiety and depression in high school students and increasing the risk of chronic lung disease in adults. These effects certainly must enter into a decision to ban all vaping products. We must be clear that nicotine is an addictive chemical and addiction to nicotine increases the profits of big tobacco but decreases the health of your constituents. This is a costly equation for your community.

I have listened to the retailers' desire for consistent laws throughout the county. The surrounding communities of Petaluma, Sebastopol, Windsor and the unincorporated areas of Sonoma County have all passed similar TRL's prohibiting vaping products. The provisions included in all of these TRL's vary slightly but all include the following

- No sale of flavored tobacco products
- No online or delivery sales
- **No sale of electronic smoking devices** (This appears to be the most contentious provision. It is included because these devices are driving youth tobacco addiction at increasingly younger ages.)
- Minimum price of \$10
- Minimum pack size – 5 little cigars
- No discounts, coupons, or price promotions
- No sale of tobacco in pharmacies

- Limit on the total number of tobacco retailers
- New retailer proximity parameters (E.g., proximity to K-12 schools & parks)

Comprehensive TRLs are effective policy tools to generate income for local enforcement to limit youth initiation of tobacco and nicotine products and to protect the environment. The environmental impact of vaping is substantial due to the batteries and mineral salts that are produced and discarded with each throw away e-cigarette.

For decades we've seen the extent to which the tobacco industry will go to put profits over people. They have no desire to improve our community's health. We urge the Santa Rosa to join Petaluma, Sebastopol , Windsor and the unincorporated area of Sonoma County in strengthening the County tobacco retail license and support public health efforts to spread these protections county-wide.

**From:** [Mary K Brown](#)  
**To:** [\\_CityCouncilListPublic](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Public comment for meeting 5/21/24 regarding Tobacco License  
**Date:** Monday, May 20, 2024 4:21:40 PM

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Dear Santa Rosa City Council members,

I am writing to strongly urge you to uphold the proposed updates/changes to the Tobacco Retail License.

I have been a local pediatrician in Sonoma County for almost 16 years and I am very concerned about the rise in vaping/electronic cigarette use( with nicotine and other substance) by the youth in our community.

I follow many middle school and high school age patients-- and have absolutely have seen a rise in the use of electronic cigarettes with nicotine in this population.

My patients tell me that vaping devices are available at an early age-- on middle school campuses-- and my high school patients tell me that they do not even go to the bathrooms at school because they are so filled with vaping smoke.

I also have definitely seen teen patients become addicted to nicotine via vaping/electronic devices.

Nicotine is a highly addictive substance, and it is so sad to see a teen struggle with nicotine addiction at such a young age.

We know that nicotine causes irritability, learning difficulties, and leads to negative health consequences like cardiovascular disease(heart attacks and strokes) over time.

Lastly, I will leave you with an actual message that a 17 year old patient of mine sent to me:

**Hi Dr. Brown,**

**I need some help. I have been addicted to vaping since I was 12 years old. I have tried to quit several times by myself but my addiction is too intense for me to overcome on my own. I'd really like to explore what medicines are available and see what you would recommend or think would work best to help reduce withdrawal symptoms. Please let me know.**

It was heartbreaking to see that teen struggle with her addiction as we tried all the



available resources to help her.

Therefore, I urge you to please make the changes proposed for the Tobacco Retail License update-- to protect the health and well being of the youth in Sonoma County.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration,

Dr. Mary Kathryn Brown

Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa Pediatrics

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Thank you.