

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

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](#)

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](#)



We create health for people, communities and the planet through love, healing food and empowering the next generation.

[Classes](#) | [Get Involved](#)



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.ⁱ

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.ⁱⁱ

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.ⁱⁱⁱ 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.^{iv} Puff Bar is the most popular vaping product. One Puff Bar contains as much nicotine as at least 50 cigarettes.^v

Local data reflect these disturbing national trends. In Sonoma County in January 2023, 8% of 9th graders and 13% of 11th 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.^{vi}

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.^{vii} In Sonoma County, tobacco use is responsible for an estimated 503 deaths annually, representing 13% of total annual deaths.^{viii}

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

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

ⁱⁱ 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>

ⁱⁱⁱ 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]

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

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

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

^{vii} 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].

^{viii} 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://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/benfield-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.santarosafoward.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 10th 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 and cursive.

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

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

Board of Directors

Surani Kwan, DNP, MBA, FNP-BC, FACHE, FAANP
President
Carme Luis, MS, SPHR
Secretary
Michael Woon-Fat, MBA,
Treasurer
Gary Hochman,
Past President
Jane Read, RN, MSN
Brian Dufour, NDTR
Kimberly Petty, MBA
Yudith Correa, RN, MSN
Andrew Spaulding, JD
Monique Most, Ed.D.
Brittany Lobo, MPH

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.

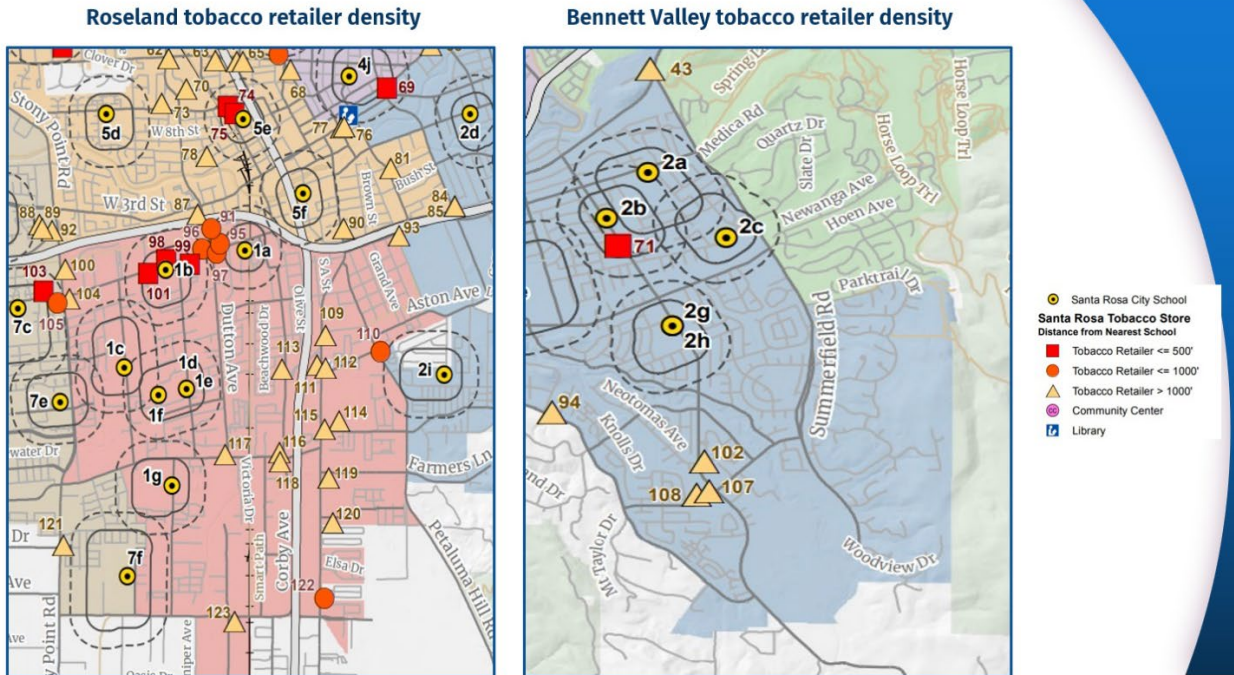
A major recommendation published in the Portrait was to "Redouble Antismoking Efforts." This is because commercial tobacco use being a major cause of heart and lung disease and several other health destroying and life-shortening issues.

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

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