



Public Opinion Research Survey: July 2006

Survey of California Latino Renters

About Smokefree Multi-Unit Housing Laws

Background

Drifting secondhand smoke in multi-unit housing from neighboring units, balconies and outdoor areas is a health hazard for many tenants. The increasing awareness of the dangers of secondhand smoke and the acceptability of smokefree environments are encouraging tenants to seek out smokefree units and property owners to declare their buildings smokefree. In addition, several cities and counties have passed ordinances restricting smoking in multi-unit housing. Since 2003, the Center for Tobacco Policy & Organizing has commissioned a series of scientific public opinion research surveys to assess attitudes among tenants, voters, and apartment owners and managers about secondhand smoke exposure and what to do about it. The surveys were conducted by Goodwin Simon Victoria Research.

In July 2006, 400 Latino renters in California were surveyed to assess their views about secondhand smoke exposure in their homes, and what solutions they would support for limiting their exposure. 97% of the interviews were conducted in Spanish. Latino renters were surveyed because the Center's 2004 poll of California renters showed stronger support for smoking restrictions in multi-unit housing among Latino renters than California renters overall.

Summary of Key Findings

Secondhand Smoke Exposure in Multi-Unit Housing

Latino renters in California understand secondhand smoke is harmful, are bothered by drifting secondhand smoke and have individuals living in their apartment complexes who are significantly impacted by exposure:

- 98% believe that secondhand smoke is harmful to those who inhale it
- 86% think that secondhand smoke can drift from apartment to apartment
- 82% believe that secondhand smoke can drift from outside into an apartment unit
- 63% have experienced secondhand smoke drift into their apartment
- 63% are bothered by secondhand smoke drifting into their apartment
- 64% are bothered by secondhand smoke in indoor common areas of their apartment building
- 58% are bothered by secondhand smoke in outdoor common areas of their apartment building
- 88% have children living in their apartment complex
- 51% have senior citizens living in their apartment complex

Smoking Restrictions in Multi-Unit Housing

Latino renters in California are supportive of different types of laws to protect residents in multi-unit housing from secondhand smoke exposure:

- 82% feel that there is a need for laws to limit smoking in apartments
- 85% support a law to prohibit smoking in outdoor common areas of multi-unit housing
- 82% support a law requiring apartment buildings to offer non-smoking sections of units
- 95% would prefer to live in an apartment building where smoking is not allowed anywhere or where there are separate smoking and non-smoking sections
- 60% believe that if there is a law restricting smoking in apartments, that an individual who repeatedly violates those restrictions should be evicted