

Public Opinion Research Survey: March 2008

# Survey of California Rural and Small Town Voters

## About Secondhand Smoke Policies

### Background

In March 2008, the Center for Tobacco Policy & Organizing commissioned a survey of 945 California rural and small town voters to gauge support for a tobacco retailer licensing ordinance. The survey also included several questions about secondhand smoke policies aimed at restricting smoking in housing and public areas. The survey was conducted by Goodwin Simon Victoria Research. Complete survey results are available at [www.Center4TobaccoPolicy.org/polling-rural](http://www.Center4TobaccoPolicy.org/polling-rural).

### Summary of Key Findings

#### Secondhand Smoke Exposure

California rural and small town voters understand the harm of secondhand smoke and show strong support for many different types of policies to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke:

- 86% feel that secondhand smoke is harmful
- 75% support a law requiring apartment buildings to offer sections with non-smoking units where all apartments, balconies and patios are smoke free
- 70% support a law requiring smoking to be restricted at outdoor events such as county fairs and rodeos
- 68% support a law prohibiting smoking in outdoor common areas of apartment buildings
- 66% support restricting smoking in downtown areas
- 55% support prohibiting smoking in parks, trails and recreation areas

#### Differences among the Three Regions

The survey was conducted in three regions of California (Central Valley, Sierra and Northern). All regions demonstrate strong support for secondhand smoke policies. The table below summarizes the secondhand smoke questions and the percentage of voters in each region that agree with the question or support the secondhand smoke policy.

	Statewide	Central Valley	Sierra	Northern
Feel secondhand smoke is harmful	86%	86%	84%	86%
Support requiring non-smoking units in apartments	75%	77%	74%	74%
Support requiring smoking to be restricted at outdoor events	70%	71%	67%	71%
Support prohibiting smoking in outdoor common areas of apartment buildings	68%	68%	69%	66%
Support restricting smoking in downtown areas	66%	71%	62%	65%
Support prohibiting smoking in parks, trails and recreation areas	55%	58%	51%	58%

### Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted of 945 rural and small town voters in California in March 2008. Rural and small town voters were identified by excluding Bay Area and Southern California counties, excluding counties with a population density exceeding 110 people per square mile and then, from the remaining 29 counties, excluding cities with a population over 25,000. The rural counties were divided into three regions (Central Valley, Sierra and Northern) with an equal number of voters (315) surveyed in each region. This document summarizes the results for the secondhand smoke questions. Separate Key Findings summarize the results for the tobacco retailer licensing ordinance questions. The margin of error for the survey results as a whole is plus or minus 3.1% at a 95% confidence level.