



Secondhand Smoke Survey: Outdoor Dining

California Voters' Attitudes About Secondhand Smoke Exposure

Public Opinion Research Survey: November 2008

Background

There is a growing body of scientific evidence that documents the harmful effects of secondhand smoke exposure, including the US Surgeon General's finding that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke, and the California Air Resources Board designation of secondhand smoke as a toxic air contaminant. Yet Californians are still exposed to secondhand smoke in outdoor areas, in multi-unit housing and in Indian casinos. Many cities and counties throughout the state have passed laws to restrict smoking in outdoor areas such as parks, beaches, farmer's markets and outdoor seating at bars and restaurants and some cities have passed laws to create nonsmoking sections of apartments in multi-unit housing. In addition, some California Indian tribes have voluntarily created nonsmoking sections in Indian casinos.

In November 2008, the Center for Tobacco Policy & Organizing commissioned a survey of 600 California voters to assess their views about secondhand smoke and to gauge their level of support for reducing exposure to secondhand smoke. Specifically, the survey explored general attitudes about restricting smoking in outdoor areas, in outdoor dining areas, in multi-unit housing, and in Indian casinos.

This document highlights the Summary of Key Findings for outdoor dining. Additionally, there are three other Summary of Key Findings that highlight the results for multi-unit housing, the results for Indian casinos and the results for the entire secondhand smoke survey. The survey was conducted by Goodwin Simon Victoria Research. Complete survey results and the other summary documents are available at www.Center4TobaccoPolicy.org/polling-shs.

Summary of Key Findings

Secondhand Smoke Restrictions in Outdoor Dining Areas

California voters know that secondhand smoke is harmful and are supportive of restricting smoking in outdoor areas of bars and restaurants:

- 97% believe that secondhand smoke is harmful to those who inhale it
- 88% believe that secondhand smoke is harmful to those who inhale it in outdoor areas
- 60% have been bothered by secondhand smoke exposure in outdoor dining areas in the past year
- 56% support restricting smoking at outdoor areas of bars and restaurants

More survey results on the next page.

California voters are receptive to the arguments in support of restricting smoking in outdoor dining. The support for each statement asked about in this survey is listed below:

- 74% were more likely to support smoking restrictions when they heard that it would protect workers at restaurants and bars from having to inhale dangerous secondhand smoke
- 72% were more likely to support smoking restrictions when they heard that it would protect diners from having to inhale dangerous secondhand smoke while dining
- 66% were more likely to support smoking restrictions when they heard that about 40 cities in California plus the entire state of Hawaii have laws restricting smoking in outdoor dining and the laws have had little or no negative impact on bars and restaurants

Opposition statements to restricting smoking at outdoor dining were less effective. In fact, opposition arguments were more likely to have no impact on voters or to make them more likely to support smoking restrictions. The support for each opposition statement asked about in the survey is listed below:

- 38% were more likely to oppose smoking restrictions when they heard that it would hurt bars and restaurants and drive away customers, while 61% said this argument had no effect or made them more likely to support smoking restrictions
- 36% were more likely to oppose smoking restrictions when they heard that it would be difficult to enforce and would place an unfair burden on bar and restaurant owners, while 63% said this argument had no effect or made them more likely to support smoking restrictions
- 29% were more likely to oppose smoking restrictions when they heard that it would force smokers on to the sidewalk where the cigarette butts will create a mess, while 71% said the argument had no effect or made them more likely to support smoking restrictions