NOVEMBER 2018

Despite years of effort, youth are still able to illegally purchase tobacco products in California, leading to a lifetime of addiction. To combat this problem, many communities have passed laws requiring retailers to obtain a license to sell tobacco products. A local tobacco retailer licensing ordinance includes an annual fee to fund an enforcement program and provisions for suspending or revoking the license for violations. In addition, some communities in California are adopting other policy options, such as retail outlet density and flavor restrictions, that can be “plugged-in” to the basic licensing ordinance to provide greater health protections for youth.

In July 2018, the American Lung Association’s Center for Tobacco Policy & Organizing commissioned an oversampled survey of nearly 315 California rural voters to gauge the level of support for tobacco retailer licensing ordinances and other policies in the tobacco retail environment. It was important to oversample rural voters to identify unique challenges to getting ordinances adopted in rural communities.

Survey Methodology

Goodwin Simon Victoria Research conducted a dual mode survey of California voters. First, a main sample of 577 voters (including urban, suburban, and rural) was drawn from a list of registered voters in California. Then pollsters over sampled an additional 256 rural voters. Combined samples provide results for a total of 315 rural voters. Rural voters were identified via a combination of census data and the Nielsen Claritas Prizm database. Interviews were completed online and by land line and wireless telephones, and in English and Spanish. Fielding took place between July 25 and August 5, 2018. The margin of error for the main study is +/- 4% and +/- 5.5% for rural only at a 95% confidence level.

Resources

The Center for Tobacco Policy & Organizing has many resources on tobacco retailer policies and additional survey results available at www.center4tobaccopolicy.org/tobacco-policy/tobacco-retail-environment/

These include documents that track ordinances in the tobacco retail environment such as flavored tobacco restrictions, and a document showing the effectiveness of tobacco retailer licensing ordinances in reducing sales to minors.

For model ordinance language for many of the policies in the survey, visit the website of the ChangeLabSolutions at www.changelabsolutions.org/
Summary of Key Findings

1. Voter’s Perception of Youth Access to Cigarettes
   California rural voters are aware of the access youth have to tobacco products.
   - 52% Feel that it is easy for minors under the age of 21 to buy electronic cigarettes at local retail stores
   - 43% Feel that it is easy for minors under the age of 21 to buy cigarettes at local retail stores

2. Support for Tobacco Retailer Licensing Ordinances
   California rural voters support the following policy provisions promoting greater enforcement against selling tobacco products to minors.
   - 87% A store owner who repeatedly sells cigarettes to minors should have their license to sell tobacco products suspended
   - 73% Requiring store owners to get a license to sell cigarettes and other tobacco products
   - 73% A fee on retailers of a few hundred dollars a year that would be used to enforce the law against selling cigarettes to minors

3. Support for Restricting Tobacco Retailers near Schools
   California rural voters support laws protect youth and limit tobacco retailers near schools.
   - 67% Support a law prohibiting any business located within 1,000 feet of a school from selling tobacco products
   - 55% Feel that stores that are currently located within 1,000 feet of a school should not be allowed to continue to sell tobacco products if such a law was adopted
4. Arguments in Favor of Restricting Tobacco Retailers near Schools

Below are CA voters’ two top good reasons to support restricting tobacco retailers near youth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70%</td>
<td>This law will reduce illegal sales to minors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74%</td>
<td>This law can reduce youth smoking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Arguments in Favor of Restricting the Sale of Flavored Tobacco

California rural voters understand the potential of saving lives by restricting the sale of flavored tobacco. Below are CA voters’ two top good reasons to support flavor restrictions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>71%</td>
<td>It can reduce youth smoking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64%</td>
<td>These products were developed as a new way to profit from a product that kills people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Arguments in Favor of Eliminating the Sale of Individual Little Cigars and Cigarillos

California rural voters understand the harm caused by these products. Below are CA voters’ two top good reasons to support eliminating the sale of little cigars and cigarillos.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65%</td>
<td>They are inexpensive, often flavored, and marketed to young smokers, so this law would discourage their use among young people and reduce youth smoking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56%</td>
<td>They are developed and marketed primarily to African Americans and Latinos, so this law can help reduce smoking rates among these groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>