

Letters to the Editor (LTE): Tobacco Control Local Grades Sample #1

Your Name
Address
E-mail
Phone number

Date: xx/xx/xxxx
To: Editor
The Publication (newspaper)
Newspaper address

Re: Hard to Breathe

To the editor:

[Cite recent local news report on State of Tobacco Control Report or include link to where readers can find the report. For example, *"I was very disappointed to see that {Insert County or City} received a {Insert grade} in the annual State of Tobacco Control Local Grades Report this week."*

The American Lung Association's "State of Tobacco Control" Report evaluates local tobacco control ordinances on a letter grading scale in three key areas: Smokefree Outdoor Air, Smokefree Housing, and Reducing Sales of Tobacco Products. **[Insert information about your county or city grades.** For example, *"{Insert County or City} has a {Insert grade} in Smokefree Housing because we do not have any policies protecting us from secondhand smoke in apartments, condominiums, or common areas."*

[Insert personal connection to the issue. For example, *"This isn't just about our city receiving a bad grade, this has real consequences for me and my family. My son has asthma, and often struggles to breathe when in the presence of secondhand smoke. His asthma is triggered in parks, in restaurant patios, and worst of all, at home in our apartment."*

[Insert relevant local data. For example, *"While the overall rate of smoking in California has decreased, in {Insert City or County} more than {Insert smoking rate} of residents still smoke, exposing residents to secondhand smoke in multi-unit housing, parks, and outdoor dining areas. 75% of residents living in multi-unit housing say they are impacted by drifting secondhand smoke in their home, with 58% supporting a policy that prohibits smoking in all units, balconies, and other common areas."*

[Insert local call to action. For tobacco tax funded projects: *"Studies have shown that passing strong policies like {Insert policy/policies the coalition is working on} is the most effective way to protect residents from the harmful effects of smoking. For more information on {Insert policy/policies the coalition is proposing}, please contact {Insert coalition coordinator's information} to attend a tobacco control coalition meeting."*

For coalition members: *"The responsibility to raise this grade lies solely with our elected officials. Local officials can and should take steps to protect residents from tobacco and secondhand smoke. That's why we encourage {Insert decision-making body, i.e. City Council} to pass {Insert policy/policies the coalition is proposing}."*

Sincerely,
[Sign here]
Type your name here

* The sample coalition members call to action is designed for coalition partners and community members. Tobacco tax funded projects cannot ask decisionmakers to pass tobacco control policies.

Remember, when adding your personal connection, local ask and recent news stories, the letter should stay under 250 words, or the publisher's requirements, which may be less.