

Logo

---

Dear Editor,

It is disheartening to witness the devastating toll that tobacco continues to inflict on our communities. The statistics from a recent survey shed light on a glimmer of hope. In 2019, 52.8% of California adults (aged 18-64) agreed or strongly agreed that the sale of cigarettes should be gradually banned. An additional 37.3% believed in an immediate ban. These statistics demonstrate the growing public support for bold measures to combat the tobacco epidemic.

According to UCSF's Project for Endgame Planning, "California is uniquely positioned to achieve a tobacco endgame, due to the effectiveness of its state tobacco control program in changing public views of tobacco and of the tobacco industry, public support for stronger policy measures, and dedicated resources."

To achieve a tobacco endgame, we must adopt multifaceted approaches that target the structural, political, and social dynamics that sustain the tobacco industry. Strategies such as eliminating tobacco sales in pharmacies, implementing retailer-free buffer zones around schools and youth-oriented areas, restricting sales to tobacco-only stores, and regulating the number of licenses issued can collectively drive the transformation needed to eradicate tobacco addiction permanently.

I implore our legislators, community leaders, and fellow citizens to rally together alongside ASH in support of the tobacco endgame. Let us work to create a healthier future for Californians by advocating for comprehensive tobacco control measures, increased funding for prevention and cessation programs, and the implementation of strict smoke-free policies.

**Californian Resident**

Logo

---

Dear Editor,

As a concerned resident, I am deeply troubled by the inequities surrounding tobacco consumption and the disproportionate burden it places on marginalized communities.

In California, “disparities in tobacco use persist according to age, gender, race, sexual orientation, socio- economic status, access to health insurance, and geography.” These disparities perpetuate unequal health outcomes, disproportionately affecting marginalized communities, including people of color, low-income individuals, LGBTQ populations, and other disadvantaged groups.

To achieve successful endgame efforts, it is important to include communities of color and LGBTQ communities who are still experiencing higher rates of tobacco use. Efforts include addressing the specific tobacco products used by different populations, considering social factors influencing tobacco use and health disparities, ensuring fair distribution of benefits, involving the community, offering culturally appropriate cessation services, and avoiding the stigmatization of tobacco use and users.

Let us strive for a California where tobacco-related health disparities are a thing of the past. I call upon legislators, public health agencies, and community leaders to prioritize equity in tobacco control efforts. By adopting inclusive policies and empowering marginalized communities, we can dismantle the barriers that perpetuate these disparities.

**Californian Resident**

Logo

---

Dear Editor,

I am writing to commend the remarkable progress made by Californian communities in advancing endgame-oriented tobacco control policies.

While Californians have already embraced smoke-free workplaces and public indoor venues, recent policies have expanded these protections to include multi-unit housing and outdoor areas like parks and beaches. These smoke-free policies not only safeguard public health but also shape social norms, fostering widespread acceptance of stronger tobacco retail regulations.

According to UCSF's Project for Endgame Planning, retailer-based interventions are vital in our fight against tobacco addiction. Local tobacco retail licensing (TRL) systems have been successfully implemented in 241 California localities. Evidence shows that "they are associated with reductions in illegal sales to minors, lower smoking prevalence among youth, and a reduction in the number of tobacco retailers.

Moreover, raising tobacco prices through a minimum floor price (MFP) and implementing restrictions on discounts have demonstrated remarkable efficacy in reducing tobacco use, particularly among vulnerable low-income populations.

To achieve a healthier California, it is imperative that we prioritize the establishment of smoke-free environments, advocate for the widespread adoption of TRL systems, and explore further pricing interventions. **[include call to action]**. By supporting evidence-based strategies that promote public health and foster healthier communities, we can ensure a brighter, smoke-free future for all.

**Californian Resident**