

JAN 18 2019

Per _____

State of Tobacco Control Report to be Released January 30th, 2019

Report will include tobacco control grades for all 58 Counties in California

Dear County Board of Supervisors:

We are pleased to announce the upcoming release of the 17th annual American Lung Association *State of Tobacco Control* report on January 30, 2019. This report assigns grades to the federal government and states based on their tobacco control laws and regulations in effect as of January 2, 2019 for Smokefree Air, Tobacco Taxes, Tobacco Prevention and Control Program Funding, Access to Cessation Services and Minimum Age.

In conjunction with the national report, the American Lung Association in California will release tobacco control report cards for all 482 incorporated cities and towns and 58 counties in California. The *State of Tobacco Control 2019 – California Local Grades* report is based on a review of all county and municipal codes in the state in four key policy areas. Since the first California report, the number of communities with an overall A or B grade has increased dramatically.

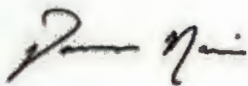
While we have made enormous progress in the fight against tobacco, it is still the number one cause of preventable death in the United States and in California. Since 1964, we have cut smoking rates by more than half, dramatically reduced exposure to secondhand smoke, reduced rates of lung cancer and other tobacco-related diseases and fundamentally changed public attitudes about tobacco resulting in millions of lives saved. Despite this progress, tobacco remains a dangerous threat, killing almost 40,000 Californians each year, causing illness in even more residents and costing the state more than \$23.6 billion in health care costs and lost productivity. More needs to be done to decrease these numbers and to stop the 441,000 kids alive today who will ultimately die prematurely from tobacco-related disease.

Every year, we see cities and counties across the state adopt policies to improve the health and wellness of their residents. These residents and their stories represent the real, tangible impact that these policies can have on a community. And, over the past 50 years, we have developed proven strategies that can achieve our public health goals if they are fully and effectively implemented. These strategies are reflected in the grading categories in both the national and local SOTC reports.

We encourage you to visit the American Lung Association in California website www.lung.org/California on January 30 to view the state and local tobacco control report cards and learn how to take action in the fight against tobacco. If your county took action to protect your residents from tobacco in 2018, thank you! If you didn't, we encourage you and your colleagues to join the fight and take steps in 2019 to help your residents.

You can find more information on our About Us page at www.lung.org/California to contact your local American Lung Association office for more information on the impact smoking is taking on your community and what can be done to combat it.

We hope you will join us in the fight to breathe easier.



Vanessa Marvin
Vice President, Public Policy & Advocacy