



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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State of Tobacco Control Report to be Released January 22, 2014

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

Dear Board of Supervisors:

We are pleased to announce the upcoming release of the 12th annual American Lung Association *State of Tobacco Control* report on January 22, 2014. This report assigns grades to the federal government and states based on their tobacco control laws and regulations in effect as of January 2, 2014. These state grades cover policies in effect as of January 2, 2014 for Smokefree Air, Cigarette Tax, Tobacco Control Spending and Smoking Cessation.

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. Grades will be assigned for the following policy categories: Smokefree Outdoor Air, Smokefree Housing, and Reducing Sales of Tobacco Products. These three grades are then averaged for one Overall Tobacco Control Grade.

State of Tobacco Control 2014 highlights the 50th anniversary of the historic 1964 Surgeon General's report that linked smoking to lung cancer and other serious diseases for the first time. We have made enormous progress in the fight against tobacco since 1964, but it is still the number one cause of preventable death in the United States. 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.

Despite this progress, the tobacco battle is far from over. Tobacco still kills 440,000 Americans every year, sickens millions more and costs the nation nearly \$200 billion in health care bills and lost productivity. The tobacco industry still designs and manipulates its products to make them as appealing and addictive as possible; spends \$8.8 billion a year -- one million dollars every hour -- on marketing that often attracts kids; and fights every effort to reduce tobacco use.

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 include tobacco tax increases, comprehensive smoke-free workplace laws, hard-hitting mass media campaigns, health insurance coverage to ensure smokers have access to quit-smoking treatments, and well-funded, sustained programs to prevent kids from smoking and help smokers quit.

On the 50th anniversary of the Surgeon General's report, we call for bold action by all levels of government to achieve three goals: 1) Reduce smoking rates to less than 10 percent within 10 years; 2) protect all Americans from secondhand smoke within five years; and 3) ultimately eliminate the death and disease caused by tobacco.

Now is the time to recommit ourselves to ending the tobacco epidemic and eliminating its often fatal consequences. We know how to win this battle and it should not take another 50 years to do so.

We encourage you to visit the American Lung Association in California website www.lung.org/California on January 22 to view the state and local tobacco control report cards and learn how to take action in the fight against tobacco. Visit 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,

Marsha Ramos
Chair, American Lung Association in California Governing Board
Former Mayor, Burbank, CA

Anita Lee
Interim Chief Executive Officer
Chief Financial Officer