

Sample Letter to the Editor

Subject: Disproportionate Impact on Communities of Color and Impacts to Rural and Low-Income Californians

The sample 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.

Download this document to edit the text below and copy/paste into your email.

Re: Disproportionate Impact of Tobacco on Communities of Color and Impacts to Rural and Low-Income Californians

To the Editor:

[Cite recent local news source if appropriate. For example, "Last week you reported that Hispanic/Latino youth are using tobacco at an alarming rate."]

I think sometimes we forget, but tobacco use is still the leading cause of premature death in California; an estimated 40,000 adults die each year due to smoking. That is a LOT of people! ☐

Even though tobacco can impact all communities, there continues to be significant disparities in tobacco use and health outcomes within communities of color, rural populations, and the LGBTQ community. ☐

Remarkably, 20.7 percent of African American adults smoke cigarettes compared to only 12.4 percent of California adults overall. Despite smoking fewer cigarettes, African American tobacco users are more likely to die from smoking-related illness than white tobacco users. Additionally, over 85 percent of African American cigarette smokers smoke menthol cigarettes, which are more addictive and more difficult to quit than non-menthol cigarettes.

In the Hispanic/Latino community, the smoking rate is slightly lower than the overall population, but 1.1 million Hispanic/Latinos smoke, which is about one-third of the total number of California smokers.

In certain Asian American (AA) populations, cigarette smoking prevalence is much higher than the rest of California. For example, the smoking rate of Korean males is 26.6 percent and 23.7 percent for Vietnamese males, compared to the smoking rate of California males overall at 16.2 percent.

For those living in rural California, tobacco use among adults is significantly higher at 25.6 percent than the overall tobacco use rate at 14.6 percent.

Cigarette smoking prevalence of the California's LGBTQ population is 18.5 percent, compared to 13 percent for non-LGBTQ adults. Although rates of tobacco use vary within the LGBTQ community, Bisexual women are up to three times more likely to smoke cigarettes than heterosexual females.

☐

[Insert personal connection to the issue. For example, "I've taken a stance on this issue because I'm concerned about how tobacco is impacting my community."]

[Insert local call to action.]



**CALIFORNIA TOBACCO
ENDGAME CENTER FOR
ORGANIZING AND ENGAGEMENT**
A project of the American Heart Association.

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[OrganizingToEndTobacco.org](https://www.OrganizingToEndTobacco.org)

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