



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

CAPITOL INFORMATION & EDUCATION DAYS



Comprehensive Messages

THE FIGHT IS NOT OVER

California is at a critical point in its fight against the Tobacco Industry.

- The truth is that tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death, taking the lives of nearly 40,000 people in California every year.¹
- Even though cities, counties, and voters across the state have enacted landmark policies to end the sale of flavored tobacco products, the Tobacco Industry is back to its old tricks. They've introduced new menthol-like flavored products designed to evade the effects of these state and local flavored tobacco laws.²
- California must maintain the pressure on the Tobacco Industry in order to stop the harm to our kids, targeted and historically disenfranchised communities, and the environment.
- It's time to finish the fight, because as long as the Tobacco Industry is allowed to sell its deadly products in California, the tobacco epidemic will continue.

Tobacco Industry Deliberately Targets Historically Marginalized Communities for Profit

- The Tobacco Industry intentionally targets and profits from African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander, American Indian, LGBTQ+, and rural communities resulting in addiction, disease, and death.³

- Our work must continue to focus on the inclusivity of historically disenfranchised communities and incorporate intersectionality with all tobacco control efforts. The Tobacco Industry continues to cause harm and health disparities in historically disenfranchised communities,⁴ which already experience institutionalized racism, homophobia, transphobia, lack of access to quality healthcare and other forms of bias and exclusion which exacerbate these disparities.⁵
- The Tobacco Industry spends billions on advertising campaigns that leverage racist, sexist, and transphobic ideologies to sell their deadly products.⁶ They use Black celebrities to sell menthol cigarettes in advertisements concentrated in Black neighborhoods,⁷ sponsor LGBTQ+ pride events,⁸ and offer big discounts for tobacco products in low-income communities to make addiction more affordable.⁹

Money Fuels Tobacco Industry Influence and Power

- The Tobacco Industry will spare no expense to gain and addict more customers, **spending \$8.4 billion a year nationwide to promote their deadly products**, with an estimated **\$447 million spent in California alone**, annually.¹⁰
- The Tobacco Industry continues to use its enormous wealth and political power to fight laws that would protect public health. During

- the election cycle 2020-2022, tobacco interests contributed **more than \$25 million to candidate and ballot measure campaigns**.^{11,12} In just 2021-2022, tobacco interests spent nearly **\$3.5 million on lobbying** tobacco policy-related legislation.¹⁴
- Nearly \$22 million of the Tobacco Industry's campaign cash was spent to put SB 793 on the ballot thereby delaying implementation of the new law to take candy flavored and menthol tobacco off the shelves.¹³ The Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids estimates that during the time the law was delayed, the Tobacco Industry generated about \$800 million in revenue from menthol cigarette sales alone; not a bad return on investment.¹⁴

Taxpayers Foot the Bill for Tobacco Industry Practices

- Every time the Tobacco Industry addicts another generation of young people, they put taxpayers – whether they smoke or not – on the hook for more than \$18 billion in healthcare-related costs a year in California.¹⁵
- Taxpayers cover the cost of cleaning up the Tobacco Industry's trash. Cigarette butts are still the #1 trash item found on beaches and roadsides.¹⁶ California taxpayers spend over \$41 million each year on tobacco waste cleanup from roadsides, and the state's largest cities spend between \$7.1 million (San Francisco) and \$19.7 million (Los Angeles) per year cleaning up tobacco litter.¹⁷

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