

2023 | CAPITOL INFORMATION & EDUCATION DAYS



The Fight is Not Over: The Tobacco Industry Continues to Harm California's Latino Community

It's time to protect Latino families from the burden created by the Tobacco Industry.

Tobacco disproportionately impacts our Latino community.

- California's adult Latino population has a cigarette smoking rate of 6.2%, which is lower compared to other racial/ethnic groups. Even so, the estimated 701,000 Latinos who smoke in California represent the second largest group of adult smokers in the state after non-Hispanic Whites.¹
- Cancer, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes—all of which are linked to tobacco use—are among the four leading causes of death in this community.²
- Latinos are at a higher risk of secondhand smoke (SHS) exposure in multi-unit housing (MUH).³ This is especially concerning given that Latino households are more likely to include children than non-Latino households (49 percent vs. 26 percent).⁴ This poses a serious threat to Latino children living in MUH as continuous SHS impairs a child's ability to learn and may negatively impact their academic performance.⁵
- Latino communities are burdened with a higher density of retailers selling tobacco, at 103.3 per 100,000 residents compared to 78.0 for the general population.⁸ Close proximity of tobacco retailers increases the likelihood of initiation of tobacco use among youth and young adults.
- The 2021 National Youth Tobacco Survey found that Latino middle school students reported the highest rates of ever using e-cigarettes.⁶ This is a direct result of intentional targeting of Latino youth by the



Tobacco Industry by creating vaping products in flavors such as horchata, tres leches, and churros.⁷

- California's smoke-free workplace law⁹ does not apply to outdoor work such as painting, construction, maintenance, and agriculture in which Latinos are overrepresented in these jobs.¹⁰ Latinos are also overrepresented in hospitality and housekeeping jobs, where they are often exposed to secondhand and thirdhand smoke.^{11, 12}
- Tobacco companies have donated to many Latino elected officials and organizations to positively shape policy and community leadership perceptions in favor of tobacco. Most recently, Altria sponsored the Latino Caucus of California Counties¹³ and utilized the California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to oppose Proposition 31.

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