

2024 | CAPITOL INFORMATION & EDUCATION DAYS

Commercial Tobacco's Impact: Costly for 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 9.8%, which is lower compared to other racial/ethnic groups. Even so, the estimated 1.1 million Latinos who smoke in California represent the second largest group of adult smokers in the state after non-Hispanic Whites.¹
 - Three of the leading causes of death among Latinos—cancer, heart disease, and stroke—can be caused by cigarette smoke, which is also a risk factor for diabetes, a fourth major cause of death among Latinos.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.
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- 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}

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