



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

CAPITOL INFORMATION & EDUCATION DAYS



Hook, Line & Sinker: Legislative Meeting Talking Points

Legislators are deeply invested in their districts—they live there and represent those communities in Sacramento. To effectively engage them, it's essential to highlight local issues and impacts, share personal stories, and provide community-specific data and examples of how the nicotine crisis is threatening the health of people in their district.

HOOK: Setting the Stage

The meeting leader introduces themselves, thanks the legislator or staff for their time, and briefly outlines the meeting's topics. If the group is small, everyone can introduce themselves. For larger groups, to save time, consider having one representative per county to introduce the groups present.

"Thank you for meeting with us. I'm [Name] and we're constituents working on tobacco prevention issues in [County/Region/Cities- whatever is appropriate]. While cigarette smoking remains a major public health concern, we're here to tell you about California's rapidly growing nicotine crisis. The tobacco and nicotine industry is aggressively promoting new, high-nicotine products and marketing them as a 'better alternative' to help people quit smoking."

LINE: Message

Share local impacts, relevant data, and personal stories about how tobacco and nicotine impacts the community, emphasizing local policies passed through community efforts. Keep in mind, California's tobacco prevention history demonstrates how local actions have led to statewide change. Have someone share their personal story that ties directly to the data, helping to bring it to life.

"California has long led the nation in tobacco prevention, from smokefree workplaces to ending flavored tobacco sales, raising tobacco taxes, and passing hundreds of local policies, including eliminating all tobacco sales in cities like Beverly Hills, Manhattan Beach, and Tiburon. But this evolving nicotine crisis now threatens this progress. Big Nicotine is flooding the market with cheap, high-nicotine products designed to attract new users and to keep people addicted. In fact, vapes - and now these new nicotine pouches - are the most popular tobacco products among California youth.

As you probably already know, Nicotine is an addictive chemical and harms the heart and the brain. Many vapes now contain as much nicotine in one device as a carton of cigarettes. These products are cheaper, stronger, and heavily marketed. Today, we'll share how this crisis is impacting your district and what you can do to help protect community health."

SINKER: Making the Ask

We're asking you to help us fight the Nicotine and Tobacco Industry by combatting California's growing nicotine crisis. You can play a critical role by:

- 1) Sharing the truth about high-nicotine products and their risk for addicting a whole new generation of kids.*
- 2) Promoting Evidence-Based Cessation Strategies and Services, including the Kick It California Quitline, to ensure residents can access free and effective treatment.*
- 3) Connecting with your local coalitions and community partners so you can stay informed about district-specific trends, activities, and community prevention efforts.*

WRAPPING UP THE MEETING

Thank the legislator or staffer for their time, then give them the I&E Days Leave Behind document and any additional resources your group brought (limit to a few resources). Recap any follow-up actions and ask if they'd be willing to take a photo with the group.

"Thank you for meeting with us today. We appreciate your attention to these issues and look forward to following up on [specific follow-up]. Before we finish, would you be willing to take a photo with our group for social media?"

————— **Don't forget to submit the Legislative Feedback Form!** —————