

## Executive Summary

**In 2017, California's successful effort to raise the tobacco tax finally paid off. Hundreds of millions of dollars are now going to strong tobacco control and prevention programs, health care and dental care for Californians. The state's success earned California the best grades in the country in the American Lung Association's *State of Tobacco Control 2018* report.**

The national report tracks progress on key tobacco control policies at the state and federal levels as of January 2, 2018. The report assigns grades to every state in five key areas. This year's report features California at the top of the pack thanks to our strong tobacco control policies, earning A's for Tobacco Prevention and Control Funding and Smokefree Air policies, B's for our Tobacco Tax and Minimum Age policies, and a C for Access to Cessation Services. California's grades are the best in the country and reflect major steps that were taken in 2016 and 2017.

Despite the significant progress, our fight against the damage caused by tobacco remains monumental. Tobacco continues to be the number one cause of preventable death in California. Over one-quarter of all cancer deaths in California are attributable to smoking, and nearly 11,000 kids start smoking each year.

While 2016 may have been a great year for tobacco control efforts at the state level, 2017 was a successful year for local tobacco control efforts. Not only did a record number of communities increase their grade to an A, the type of policies adopted at the local level included new and innovative ideas to address tobacco control issues. Additionally, some communities that struggled in the past to address the impacts of tobacco are stepping up and adopting strong policies to protect their residents.

That is why, in coordination with the national report, the American Lung Association in California releases its *State of Tobacco Control 2018 - California Local Grades* report to track how well California municipalities protect their citizens from the burden of tobacco. The *State of Tobacco Control 2018 - California Local Grades* report is based on a review of county and municipal codes in four key areas for all 58 counties (which cover the unincorporated areas of the county) and 482 incorporated cities and towns in the state. Since the first such report, the number of communities with an overall "A" or "B" grade has increased dramatically.

The purpose of the *State of Tobacco Control 2018 - California Local Grades* report is to increase public knowledge about local laws that protect residents from the deadly toll of tobacco and to encourage local leadership to take action where improvement is needed. Leadership on key issues and solutions to these difficult problems can come from every level of government. Local elected officials can, and should, take steps to protect residents from tobacco and secondhand smoke.

### Highlights from this year's California report include:

- A record number of 10 communities improved their overall grade to an "A" this year
- More than a dozen communities increased their grade from an "F" to an "A" in at least one policy area
- 17 fewer communities received overall "F" grades compared to 2016