

## Executive Summary

California continues to be a nationwide leader in the fight for clean air and healthy lungs. Hundreds of millions of dollars each year are going to better the lives of Californians by funding strong tobacco control and prevention programs. The state's efforts are reflected in the American Lung Association *State of Tobacco Control 2019* national report.

The national report tracks progress on key tobacco control policies at the state and federal levels as of January 2, 2019. The report assigns grades to every state in five key areas. This year's report features California at the top of the pack, earning an "A" for Smokefree Air policies and "B's" for Tobacco Prevention and Control Funding, Tobacco Tax, Minimum Age, and Access to Cessation Services. These grades overall place us within the top 5 states in the country and reflect California's dedication to ending the tobacco epidemic.

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 over 9,000 kids start smoking each year.

The tobacco industry continues to find creative ways to hook new generations of smokers by marketing and selling new products. Local tobacco control efforts have remained diligent in taking common sense approaches and pushing necessary policies to address new challenges. Communities throughout California are taking strong stances to protect their youth and all residents from the harms of tobacco.

To highlight these efforts, in coordination with the national report, the American Lung Association in California releases its *State of Tobacco Control 2019 - California Local Grades* report to track how well California municipalities protect their citizens from the burden of tobacco. The *State of Tobacco Control 2019 - California Local Grades* report is based on a review of county and municipal codes in four key areas for all 58 counties (which covers the unincorporated areas of each county) and 482 incorporated cities and towns in the state. Since the first such report in 2009, the number of communities with an overall "A" or "B" grade has increased dramatically.



The purpose of the *State of Tobacco Control 2019 - 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. Grades are not intended to reflect the efforts of local tobacco control coalitions, the broader public health community or organizations working to advance local tobacco control policies. Instead, responsibility for enacting these life- and revenue-saving policies falls to elected officials in each community. 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.